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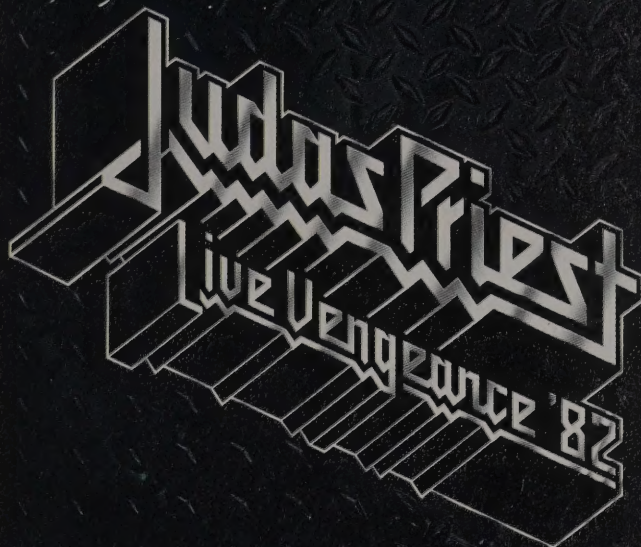
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LEGENDS LESSONS

Thank you for your recent *Legends of Metal* issue. As someone who only got into metal in the late '90s (I'm now 18 years old), I appreciate the opportunity to learn more about the form's formative forces. I especially appreciated the feature on Cream, since I had been reading reviews of their recent "reunion" shows, and wasn't sure what all the fuss was about. Now I understand.

Nate

Burlington, VT

I have a problem with your *Legends of Metal* issue. Where was Rage Against the Machine? They were one of the key metal bands of the '90s, don't you think? Okay, you put in Audioslave, but do you really think Cornell and Co. hold a candle to primal Rage? I think not!

Trudi

San Francisco, CA

Your "Fast Facts" in *Legends of Metal* were a lot of fun. May I recommend that you put facts like those in about every band you write about in *Hit Parader*—not just the legends. I think it

always knew they were going to be huge. Why do I tell you this? Not, unlike many of your readers, it is to toot my own horn. It's to say that when I give a "thumb's up" to the Knot's new **9.0: Live**, it doesn't come from someone who just saw them for the first time on the *Subliminal Verses* tour. I didn't know if it would be possible to capture all of the band's energy on an album, but this double-disc does it.

Bill

Houston, TX

Hearing Slipknot without seeing then kind'a defeats the whole purpose of the band, doesn't it? I mean it's one thing to listen to a new studio album, where you can let your imagination run free, but a live album from the Knot only presents half the experience of going to a Knot show. Hey, it's better than nothing, and a LOT better than what 90% of the other bands out there are doing, but to me, it's still a little disappointing.

Ralph

Brooklyn, NY

Oh my God, what is *Hit Parader* gonna do? Slipknot say that they're not even gonna *think* about recording for the rest of 2006. Who are you guys gonna put on the cover every month if the Knot takes a long vacation? May I ever-so-humbly recommend Korn, System of a Down, Audioslave and the Darkness, all bands that have proven that they can take the ol' ball and run with it in previous years.

Art

Newark, NJ

9.0: Live rocks! I cranked

it, and my mother threatened to kick me out of the house. That's when I know an album is great!

Pete

Williamsport, PA

KORN POPS

Wow!! I'm totally blown away by *See You on the Other Side*. It's the most creative hard rock album I've heard in years! It mixes metal, industrial and pop elements together in an amazing fashion. It's one of

Korn: Missing Head?



The photo of Layne Staley in *Legends of Metal* blew my mind! He looks so young, so innocent! I've been a fan of Alice in Chains' for more than a decade, yet I had never even seen that photo. Good stuff. In fact, some of the photos in that issue are the best I've ever seen—including that amazing shot of Ozzy. Have you thought about doing a *Best Metal Photos* issue? If you haven't, you should.

Dan

Toledo, OH

would be great to have a few key facts about those bands so that fans both old and new can get a quick overview of why they're important.

Matt

Hampton, VA

NO POINT NINE?

I've been a Slipknot fan for nine years. I was into the band from the time that their underground "demo" was first released. I

those albums that *never* gets boring! I admit that I was worried when I first heard that Korn was planning on working with a number of "pop" producers, but everything seems to have worked out perfectly.

John
New Haven, CT

Even after listening to it over and over again over the last few months, I haven't made my mind up about Korn's **See You on the Other Side**. On one hand I applaud the band's desire to experiment and expand their artistic base. On the other, I miss the basic guitar-driven power that first made their rock and roll rep. I still love Korn, and appreciate everything that they do, but I'm not so sure if they're headed in the right direction.

Lance
Dallas, TX

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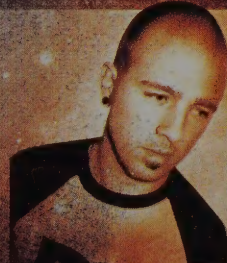


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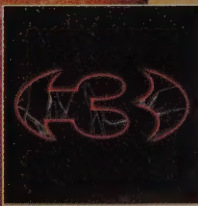
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WE READ YOUR MAIL



Rage Against the Machine:
Sorely missed.

UNEARTH
8-08-06

Nobody asked me, but I think that Korn really misses Head. When he was in the band, they were more reliant on guitars than they are on their new album. I read in **Hit Parader** that Jonathan Davis hasn't even spoken to Head since he left the band... yet he calls him a "brother." That's really sad. Head may have had his problems, but he was a vital cog in Korn's success. I hope everyone realizes that.

Tanya
Memphis, TN

When a list of the most influential bands in heavy music history is compiled, Korn must be at the very top of that list. Think about it— when it comes to the bands that truly put their stamp on a generation, who other than Sabbath, Zeppelin and Van Halen made more of an impact than Korn? Granted, the mid-'90s were not the best of times for hard rock, but without Korn's pervasive presence, that time would have been a veritable metal wasteland.

Ben
Philadelphia, PA



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caught in the act

BY DAMON LANCASTER

P.O.D.

At first glance, P.O.D.'s vocalist Sonny, drummer Wuv, bassist Traa, and guitarist Jason seemed like fish out of water. There they were, these quintessential, super-cool Southtown boys, stuck in the heart of the good ol' U.S.A.—Columbus, Ohio, to be exact—promoting their latest disc, **Testify**. You might have thought the residents of that decidedly white-bread region of Middle America would have little association with these heavily tattooed So Cal rap/metal masters. But as they stood on stage rocking out in front of a packed throng of P.O.D.-lovin' Indy residents, it was clear the lines separating East and West, No Cal and So Cal, Heartland and Hiiland had been essentially eradicated by the power, precision and positive rock and roll message brought forth by this unique unit.

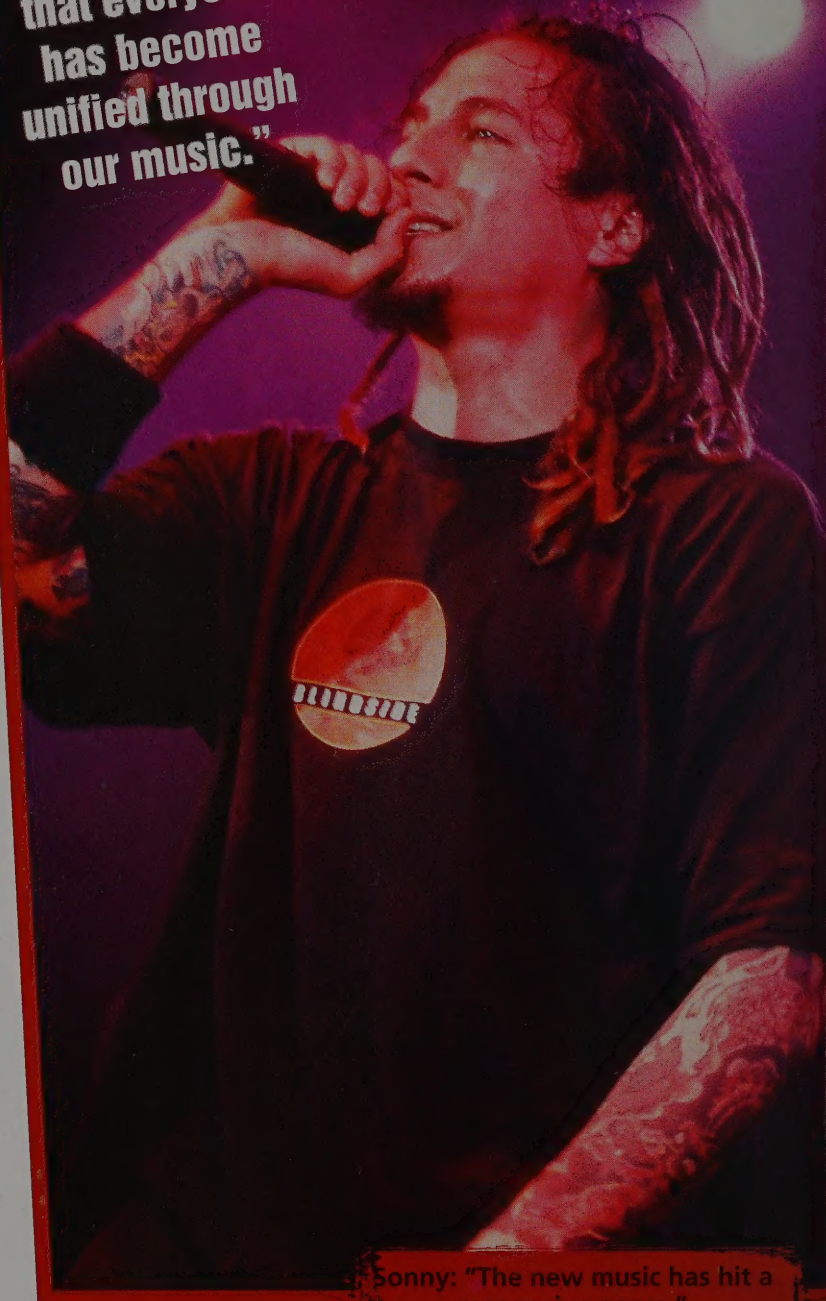
"Media outlets like **Hit Parader** and MTV have done a lot to unify everyone, everywhere in their appreciation of our music," Sonny said. "It's not like it was at one time when people of one part of the nation really didn't know about bands from another part. Now people in Chicago, or New York or Los Angeles are given the same opportunity to read about a band and see a band... at the same time. For us, that has been a factor from the very beginning, though by now we kind of hope that a lot of people already know who we are."

They all certainly do seem to know about the exploits of P.O.D. That's what happens when discs such as 1999's **The Fundamental Elements of Southtown** and 2001's **Satellite**, emerge as platinum-selling, time-tested classics. That's what happens when songs like *Boom*, *Alive* and *Youth of the Nation* stand as radio-friendly gems even five years after their initial release. And that's what happens when your dynamic live shows continue to pack theaters and arenas from Boston to Bangkok. Indeed, with **Testify** slowly picking up on the commercial momentum initially supplied by their earlier hits, in 2006 these San Diego-based rockers have reemerged as one of the most potent forces on the contemporary metal scene.

"We're very thankful for all the support that's continued to come our way," Sonny said. "When you make a new album, you never know how people are going to react to it. With **Testify**, we did some different things, bringing in a lot of musicians that we admire to work with us. Some of them didn't fit into the 'conventional' rock concept. But everyone who heard what we were doing kept telling us that we had come up with some great music. Now that we're on the road again, getting very positive reactions every night, we're starting to believe that the new music has hit a responsive chord within a lot of people."

As they seamlessly blended the material from each of their discs into a tight, pulsating, and at times overwhelming 90 minute set, it became abundantly apparent why the entire rock world has once again embraced P.O.D. With their upbeat, God-fearing, yet *never* preachy lyrical message pouring forth amid their powerful, eclectic riffs, there seemed to be an inner strength contained within the group's music. It was an emotion that drew energy directly from their insatiable following. Those in attendance could groove to the heavy beat, sway to the occasional reggae rhythms or relate to the band's hard-life philosophies. Yet perhaps more than anything else it was the sight of a sweat-drenched Sonny on stage, cajoling the crowd to new heights, that served as the true essence of the P.O.D. concert experience. There seemed to be a magical, almost mystical link

"It's amazing that everyone has become unified through our music."



Sonny: "The new music has hit a responsive nerve."

between the singer and the gathered throng, and as they responded to each of his movements and actions, that bond only seemed to grow stronger as the evening wore on.

"I want to be able to relate to the fans on every level," the charismatic singer said. "And I want them to be able to do the same with me. If we manage to do that, then we know we've put on a great show."

Baptizm of Fire

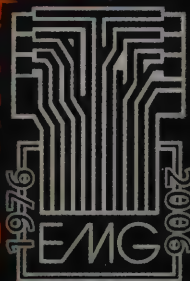
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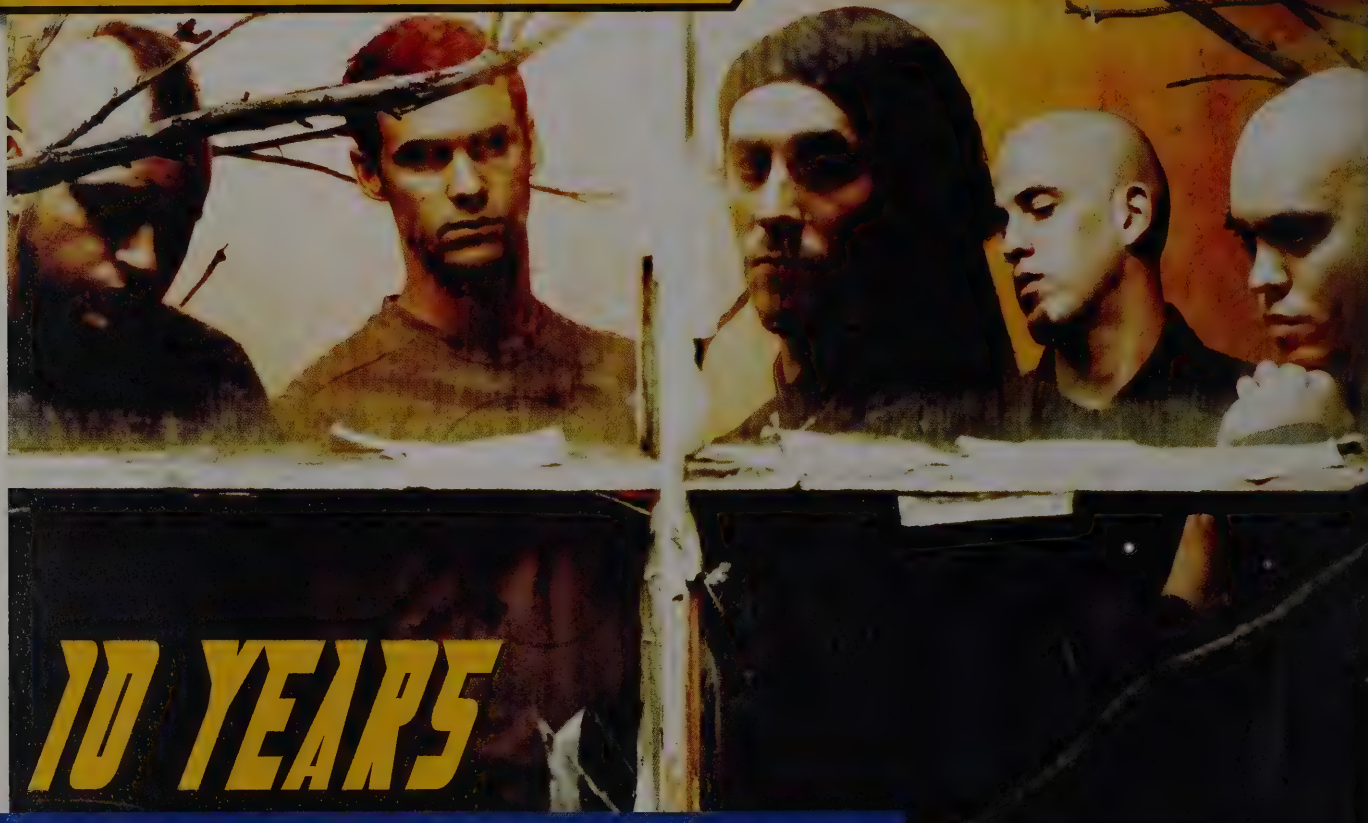
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BAND ON THE RISE!
SHOOTING STARS
BY SAM HATCHER



10 YEARS

"We believe music is supposed to be about intensity and feeling."

The music of 10 Years is all about contrast. How else could you describe a band that proudly describe their influences as ranging from Guns N' Roses to Beethoven, from Nine Inch Nails to Simon & Garfunkel? But for vocalist Jesse Hasek, guitarist Ryan Johnson, drummer Brian Vodinh, guitarist Matt Wantland and bassist Lewis Crosby such dichotomy is not only natural, it's the foundation of their musical lives. As shown throughout this Knoxville, TN-based band's debut disc, **The Autumn Effect**, this special blend of rock and roll reactants powers their music along at a blistering pace. It also fuels their sound with a series of highly provocative, and at times downright profound, lyrical stances that mark 10 Years as a band that stands proudly apart in these cookie-cutter rock and roll times.

"We've always believed that music is supposed to be about intensity and feeling," Hasek said. "But when you listen to it, there's really no thinking behind a lot of today's music. It's our job to get people to start thinking again, to feel their emotions again. You can do that in a band like ours. The risk is that our society has become so plugged in, almost like we're part of a machine. The way we see it, the more we all plug in, the less human we become."

Heavy thoughts from a decidedly heavy band. But the fact of the matter is that beneath the

wall of bone-chilling wails and heavy-handed riffs that characterize so much of 10 Years' music is a socially-conscious sensibility that almost seems out-of-place amid such sonic destruction. Undeterred by the primal nature of their approach, on such songs as *Waking Up*, *Fault Line* and *Wasteland* (the latter of which happens to be the first single drawn from **The Autumn Effect**), this unit feels quite comfortable providing their take on subjects ranging from the inherent dangers of run-away technology to the traditional problems of love-gone-wrong.

"I want everyone to relate to the songs I write," Hasek said. "That's why even when I

ality—decided to meld their divergent interests and attitudes to form a band that was unlike anything else out there. Indeed, they formed the kind of band that *they* would like to see and hear! Within months they had written dozens of songs, 14 of which were featured on the group's 2003 indie release, **Killing All That Hold You**. An additional year of writing and touring (where they opened for the likes of Static-X and Sevendust) finally brought the band to major label attention, and late in 2004 work on **The Autumn Effect**—produced by Josh Abraham of Velvet Revolver and Staind fame—began to take form. Drawing on materi-

"We want everyone to be able to relate to our songs."

write about personal experiences I do so in a very ambiguous manner; that way everyone can relate to them. The songs on this album are about life's ups and downs, the battles and the rebuilding. Everyone deals with those things, but we all deal with them in different ways. Each of these songs are like houses—we can all see the picture of the house, but we don't know what its really going to feel like until we walk through the front door."

The members of 10 Years have been developing their decidedly different hard rock philosophies since the band first came together back in 2002. Then, fresh out of high school, these five rockers—each with a radically different person-

al featured on the indie disc, and then adding to it, the 13 tracks that comprise 10 Years' introduction to the hard rock world serve as a brash and bold pronouncement that a major new force has arrived on the heavy metal scene.

"This album really is the culmination of everything for us," Hasek said. "Whether we're talking about love, substance abuse or technology, all the songs are about life and emotion. We need to learn how to become more human again, to get back in touch with our emotions, and hopefully this album will help that process along."

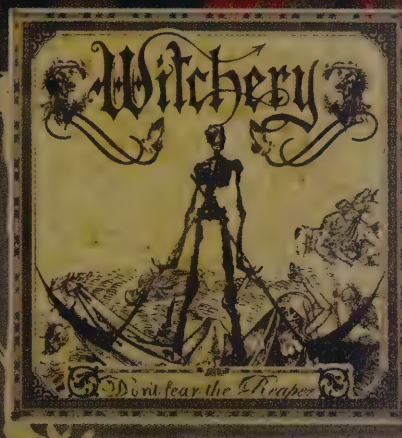
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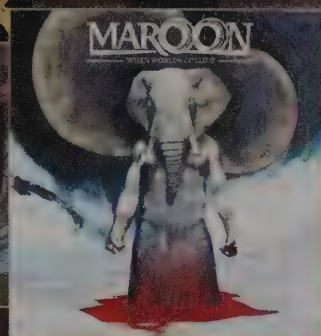
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BY PATRICK ZANETTI

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POWER PACKED

F5

To most followers of the heavy metal form, the name David Ellefson is instantly familiar. After all, the guy spent nearly two decades as Dave Mustaine's right-hand man in Megadeth, and while the two Daves have recently had a major falling out (more on that later) it certainly appears as if Mr. Ellefson's post-Mega career is off to a flying start with the release of *A Drug for All Seasons*, the debut disc by his new band, F5. Joined by vocalist Dale Steele, guitarist John Davis and drummer Dave Small, Ellefson's new unit rocks with the kind of power and purpose you'd expect. But if you imagined F5 to be little more than a Megadeth clone, then you'd better think again.

"I've always believed that music should have melody, no matter how heavy it is," Ellefson said. "A lot of what I'm hearing out there today is too one-dimensional for my tastes. That's why when we started writing for this album, it was very important that we always keep in mind the concept that a song needs to be melodic as well as heavy. What was interesting is that when F5 first got together, we wrote a number of songs that followed a more traditional heavy metal blueprint. But as things moved along we started adding elements and eventually ended up with a sound all our own—one that has a unique blend of heaviness and melody."

That balance between wall-shaking heaviness and hum-along melodicism comes to light throughout *A Drug for All Seasons*. On such songs as *Faded*, *Fall to Me* and *Dying on the Vine*, Ellefson has clearly managed to distance himself from his past musical associations while maintaining a strong hold on the hard rock world. While this stuff may feel a bit light to those expecting a vintage dose of Megadeth's heavy-handed riffing, that was kind'a/sort'a the quintessential point behind the advent of F5. Indeed, any and all associations with Megadeth seem to be rather touchy subjects these days, especially since Ellefson has been engaged in a series of on-going battles with

Mustaine over a variety of Megadeth-related issues. But thankfully, the bassist has recently begun to put his historic past in its proper perspective, not only launching F5, but another band, Killing Machine, while also finding the time to take on a variety of exciting on-the-road projects with groups like Sepultura.

"I guess you could say that I enjoy keeping busy," he said with a smile. "It's nice to know that I'm in demand. Whether it's in the studio, or on the road, when the opportunity comes to play some great music with people I really like, then I'll do it. I came to the realization not too long ago that it just doesn't pay to play with people you don't enjoy being with. What's the point? It goes beyond fame or fortune... at least for me. I still get just as much enjoyment out of music as I ever have—in fact, I think I probably appreciate it more today than ever before."

Despite all that he's currently engaged in, Ellefson knows that wherever he goes and whatever else he does, the inevitable Megadeth questions will emerge. Of course, that's somewhat understandable considering the long and often glorious times the bassist spent in that band's metallic employ. But today, with a number of petty disputes raging between Ellefson and Mustaine (including a recent lawsuit filed by Mustaine prohibiting Ellefson from using the Megadeth name in musical equipment ads), it seems as if the idea of a Megadeth "reunion" is about the last item on Ellefson's musical agenda. In fact, it seems as if the bassist is rather reluctant to discuss his past associations at all.

"There really isn't that much to say," he stated. "I'd much rather have people focus on what I'm doing now. I'm happy that they enjoyed what music I may have been involved with in the past, but I think they'll enjoy this music just as much. With F5, I've tried to take everything I've learned over the years and bring it into the 21st Century. There are definitely some elements that long-time fans will enjoy... at least I sincerely hope they will."

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DEADLINE

"With the four of us there's always been a lot of energy... a lot of smiles. Even before we had any lyrics for some of these songs, Chris would just be scat singing along with the melodies— doing an amazing job in the process. I found the way he worked to be fascinating. His range is just incredible, he could sing any note at any time. It's like having another virtuoso musician in the band— but this one uses his voice."
TOM MORELLO, AUDIOSLAVE

"I think we all sense that there's a great desire all over the world to hear the kind of music Maiden plays. Even in the States— where they can be a bit fickle at times— the music is making a great resurgence."
BRUCE DICKINSON, IRON MAIDEN

"We never expect our albums to raise above cult status because of their complicated nature. They aren't the kind of albums you put on for mere entertainment. You must get *involved*! That's certainly true with this one— it is one of the most experimental albums we've ever done. It deals with the paradoxes and contradictions presented by both life and death."
JENS KIDMAN, MESHUGGAH

"Once we met Paul (Rodgers)— someone whom I've obviously admired for a very long time— things just seemed to click. He's about as different from Freddie as you can get in his stage and singing style. But he brings something to the music that is magical. The songs take on an entirely different feel, and that's what we wanted. We weren't looking for someone to mimic Freddie."
BRIAN MAY, QUEEN

"I am somewhat optimistic that there will be a future for Sabbath after this tour. There were times in the recent past when I really didn't see the light at the end of the tunnel. Ozzy didn't seem to be into it, and I just didn't know if we would ever be able to get Sabbath going again."
TONY IOMMI, BLACK SABBATH

THEY SAID IT!!!

Rock stars have a tendency to say the outrageous... the fascinating... the insightful... the amusing. All they really need is a little prodding in the right direction. That's our job here at **Hit Parader**. We call the results of our efforts, *They Said It!*

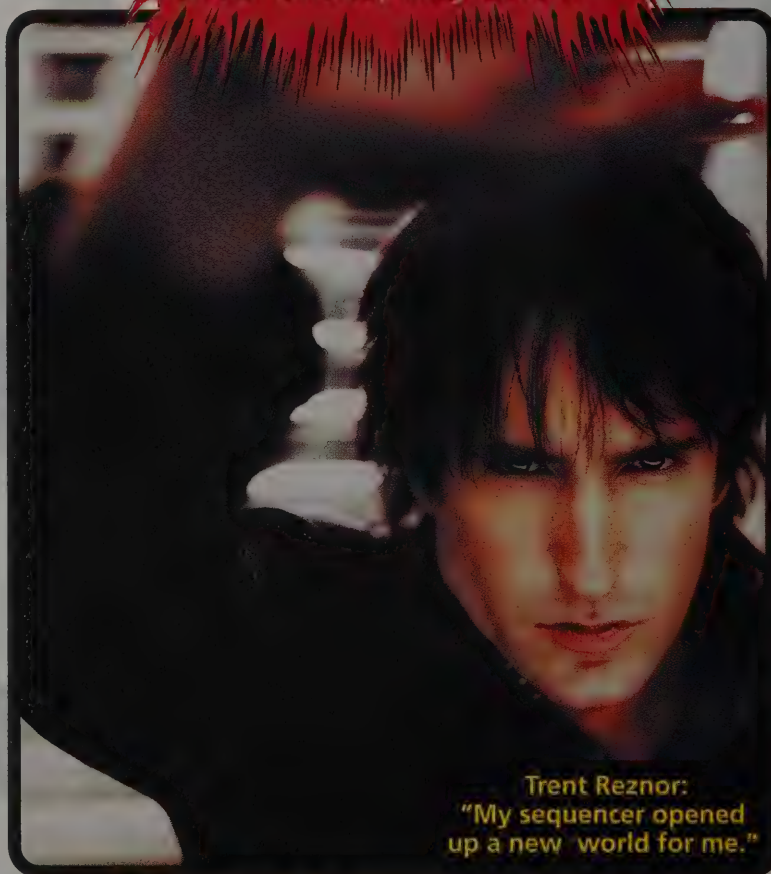
"We're such a musical band— which is something for which we don't get much credit— that there's always an overflow of ideas. When it's time for Corey and Joey and Jim to go fulfill their dreams, to take a shot at something else, then that's cool. We all thought it was great the last time, and we all supported the idea totally. And we'll all do that again. They should run with it for as long as they can. But when it's time, I know they'll come back home to Slipknot. I think we've learned how to balance these different aspects of our lives. We all tend to write on our own anyway, so being apart really will never hurt our preparation for the next Knot album at all."
CLOWN SLIPKNOT

"People sometimes have the idea that everything we do in Motley Crue is more centered on how it looks than how it sounds— that's wrong, pure and simple. I've always been on a quest to get the best sound I could whether it was on stage, or in the studio."
NIKKI SIXX, MOTLEY CRUE

"I am definitely an observer of humanity. But most of my creativity is spurred by my own imagination. Few things I've ever seen or experienced can match what the mind can come up with."
ROB ZOMBIE

"One of the things I like is that you can go back to any of the albums we made with Bon (Scott) and then put on something we did yesterday and I think you instantly know it's AC/DC. That's very important to us. Each time we go into the studio we may be looking at some changes— but nothing major. We try to make something that sounds like AC/DC."
ANGUS YOUNG, AC/DC

"I went out and got a sequencer that I could attach to my computer, and that opened up a whole new world for me."
TRENT REZNOR, NIN



Trent Reznor:
"My sequencer opened up a new world for me."

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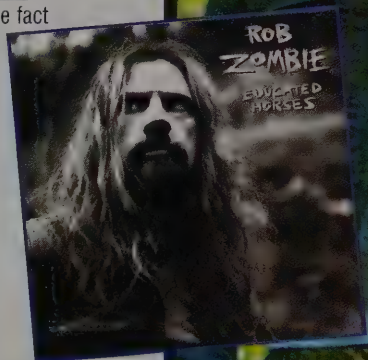
ROB ZOMBIE, *EDUCATED HORSES*

In the wake of his Hollywood success with the movies *House of 1,000 Corpses* and *The Devil's Rejects* many within the rock world had begun to worry whether Rob Zombie had lost some of his metallic focus. After all, it had been three years since his last solo disc, *The Sinister Urge*—a veritable lifetime in the here-today, gone later today rock and roll world. But with the appearance of the strangely titled *Educated Horses*, Mr. Z proves that not only does he still own his rock and roll “bones”, but that he knows how to play with them as well as anyone currently out there. Loud, intense and filled with darkly ironic, at times humorous lyrical insights, the material that fills *Educated Horses* proves that this is one old “war horse” that hasn’t forgot what to do once the musical “battle” begins.

RATING: ****

As silly as it may sound (considering the fact that the same person is at the creative core of both) I’ve always been more a fan of White Zombie than Rob Zombie’s solo work. Maybe I miss the sense of band “community” that I felt on classic WZ discs. Or maybe it’s just that on his own Zombie seems a tad more out of control. Either way, I didn’t approach *Educated Horses* with extreme expectations, thus I wasn’t disappointed. This is a very good album by a very clever dude. That’s about all I need to say.

RATING: ***



MASTODON, *BLOOD MOUNTAIN*

These days it’s hard to find a follower of the heavy metal movement who doesn’t express the belief that Mastodon has what it takes to become the form’s latest poster boys. With their heavy Iron Maidenish sound, their willingness to create thought-provoking, loosely structured “concept” albums (as they have on their latest, *Blood Mountain*) and their ability to put on rabble-raising stage performances, this Atlanta-based unit have clearly become the “it” boys of the 21st Century metal “revolution.” And if saving the hard rock world is their goal, then Mastodon come well armed to their task. Throughout *Blood Mountain* they put the proverbial pedal to the metal with style and power, in the process creating what may well be regarded as one of the signpost metal offerings of 2006.

RATING: ****

Don’t believe the hype. If you’ve picked up any metal music rag over the last year, or gotten yourself caught up in serious conversation with just about any hard rock-oriented headbanger, the name of Mastodon has emerged... most often in glowing terms. But to my time-tested ears, I hear little that is new or even slightly inventive contained within the tracks of *Blood Mountain*. I suffered a similar reaction to this group’s 2004’s over-praised *Leviathan*. Perhaps it is because the current metal scene is so barren



that so many have latched on to Mastodon; just don't count me among the converts.
RATING: **

QUEENSRYCHE, *OPERATION: MINDCRIME II*

It's been two decades since Queensryche's original, historic *Operation: mindcrime* opened the eyes and ears of the metal world through its "concept album" histrionics. Since then the disc has taken on an almost legendary status, particularly

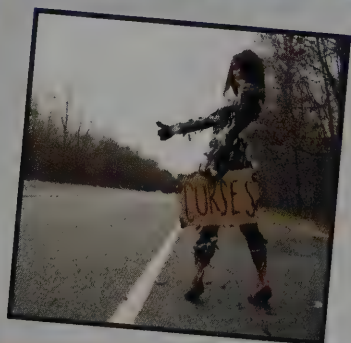


The Indies

RYE COALITION *Curses* (Gern Blandsten)

On their (catch scratch) fevered new album, *Curses*, New Jersey's hedonistic quintet Rye Coalition play a slightly glammy, '70s style of rock and roll. The Rye Coalition claim to have been brought up on things like hamburgers, Budweiser, and rock music. Judging from the noodly, whipsmart riffs and the husky, whiskey soaked, gravelly vocals of Ralph Cuseglio, we're inclined to believe the band about their non-musical influences. But musically speaking, *Curses* is a sweaty, snarky album that's as fun as a night in a hotel with a bunch of good friends, questionable women, and assorted substances! Songs like *Burn The Masters* and *Pussyfootin'* indicate that the members of TRC studied dutifully at the Kiss/AC/DC/Black Flag school of hard rawk.

STARS: ***
FOR FANS OF: Black Flag, ZZ Top, AC/DC



LACUNA COIL *Karmacode* (Century Media)

Given the fact that Lacuna Coil became Italy's most successful rock band as well as Century Media's most profitable artist over the album cycle for their last effort, *Comalies*, there were a lot of expectations laid at *Karmacode*'s door. Thankfully, Lacuna Coil delivered, as *Karmacode* surpasses its predecessor in size, scope, and sound. Songstress Cristina Scabbia croons in a way that will make you forget Evanescence ever existed, and the proggy riffs laid down by Lacuna Coil's guitarists are at once beefy and beautiful. *Fragile*, *Our Truth* and *Fragments Of Faith* are the feistiest examples of Lacuna Coil continuing to expand and fill out their already fresh, tight sound. Easily one of 2006's best.

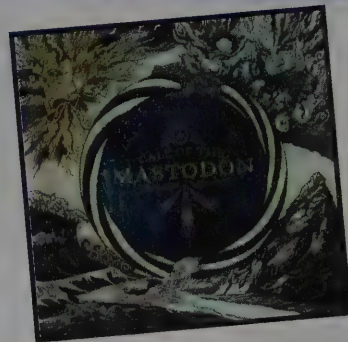
STARS: ***
FOR FANS OF: Evanescence, The Gathering, Opeth

FROM FIRST TO LAST *Heroine* (Epitaph)

If you're looking for a textbook example of a white hot, Warped Tour style band that thinks outside the punk rock box, look no further than From First To Last. *Heroine*, produced by famed rock knobsman Ross Robinson, is urgent, unflinching rock and roll with a gritty, metallic

and decidedly indie edge that may very well save rock from its current faceless, radio-friendly, and boring cycle. *Heroine*'s second cut, *The Latest Plague*, is a big, loud mess that will leave you feeling like you just went 10 rounds with Mike Tyson and lost, while *...And We Have A Hell* is built on memorable melodies and blood-soaked riffs. *Heroine* and FTL pick up where At The Drive-In left off when they broke up a few years back, hurling hard rock a few steps further into the future.

STARS: ***
FOR FANS OF: At The Drive-In, Hot Water Music



MASTODON *Call Of The Mastodon* (Relapse)

Call Of The Mastodon is not a proper, new Mastodon release. The Atlanta, Georgia quartet are busily working on their Warner Bros. debut, but in the meantime, longtime label Relapse has issued this collection that chronicles Mastodon's earliest days in the studio. It's nine of the band's first recorded efforts, remixed and remastered, and it's a *must hear* if you are a Mastodon diehard, like we here at *Hit Parader* are! *Shadows That Move* and *Thank You For This* are vintage Mastodon tracks, full of epic, barge-like riffing and artsy blasts of noise. It's clear this band knew what they wanted to sound like from the get go, as these songs sound like the Mastodon of today, only with rougher edges. *Call Of The Mastodon* deftly illustrates the band getting their legs underneath them, and will certainly tide fans over as we anxiously wait for their next full length of new material.

STARS: ***
FOR FANS OF: Neurosis, Metallica, Black Sabbath

ANTI-FLAG *For Blood And Empire* (RCA)

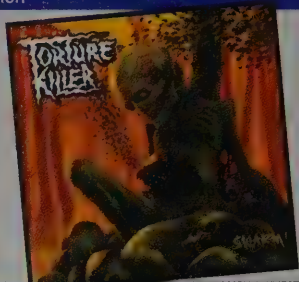
President Bush and members of your Cabinet, take cover, because Anti-Flag's *For Blood And Empire* is a loud 'n clear message to the youth of today to question all type of authority, especially that of the government. Each song is like a pointed arrow aimed at governmental targets. This is not new territory for Anti-Flag; since they've spent much of their career using their music as a vehicle. On *For Blood And Empire*, their major label debut, they managed to marry the message with their most melodically memorable music. The fiery message is encased in a pretty, easy to swallow,

The Indies

effervescent pop punk package. Bouncy, spirited numbers like *The Press Corps* and *Project For A New American Century* can incite revolution as easily as they can start circle pits.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Black Flag, Green Day, Bad Religion



TORTURE KILLER Swarm! (Metal Blade)

As if Six Feet Under weren't prolific enough, their singer, the dread-locked Chris Barnes, has lent his pipes to another project, dubbed Torture Killer. Barnes is easily the hardest working man in death metal because he produces music/songs at an alarming rate. **Swarm!** is mid-tempo death metal loaded with solos, riffs, and Barnes delivers gory, nihilistic lyrics in that signature, guttural growl of his. But what separates Torture Killer from his main band, SFU, is the speed and style of the actual music. Torture Killer is less groovy and less chunky than SFU, and songs like *Forever Dead* and *Multiple Counts Of Murder* are played much faster than anything you'd hear on an SFU record. So, if extreme metal is your bag, then Torture Killer will tickle your metal g-spot.

STARS: **

FOR FANS OF: Six Feet Under, Hatebreed

WITCH Witch EP (Tee Pee)

Most alternative rock fans remember Witch's J Mascis for his role as alt rock guitar god in the massively influential and critically adored alt rock band, Dinosaur, Jr. Witch is Mr. Mascis's "metal" band and it's as far removed from Dinosaur, Jr. as humanly possible and that's not only because Mascis has traded his axe for a seat behind the drum kit! While Mascis does anchor Witch's fuzzy, distorted hard rock rhythm section and pounding out the beats, it's the creamy, femme vocals and the marathon jams that define the band! On *Seer* and *Black Saint*, Witch makes no bones about its Black Sabbath worship. The **Witch EP** is a throwback to '70s style rock.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Black Sabbath, Kyuss, Early Man

SPITFIRE Self-Help

(Goodfellow)

Noise is the order of the day on Spitfire's **Self-Help**. The individuals that make up this Virginia-based quartet batter their instruments (and that includes their vocalist's throat tissue) with unapologetic anger and fury. **Self-Help**, which is Spitfire's first effort since reforming after a 4-year split, doesn't stop to catch its breath. The album's 11 songs — *Meat Market* and *Go Ape* are the standouts — hammer listeners with their relentless commitment to kicking arse and taking names in the process. If you like noisy metalcore bands like Norma Jean and Every Time I Die, then you'll worship at Spitfire's altar.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Coalesce, Norma Jean, Every Time I Die

FOLLY Resist Convenience (Triple Crown)

Color us, the editors at *Hit Parader*, surprised. When we slipped Folly's **Resist Convenience** into our CD player, we weren't expecting much, given the fact that the band's last effort, **TK**, was metalcore laced with ska. Ska went the way of the buffalo before the turn of the millennium, so we thought that while ambitious, Folly's musical mash up was a misstep. Fast forward to **Resist Convenience**, and we're pleased to see the band focusing on the metalcore maelstrom, and using peppy, two-stepping ska tempos and horn instruments in a more controlled, subtle fashion. The album's delicious third and fourth cuts, *False Evidence Appearing Real* and *Odds > Evens*, are the best examples of Folly "getting it right" and understanding that less is more! They don't overdo it with the ska stuff, and that allows **Resist Convenience** to be forward thinking and fresh as opposed to a stale mess.

STARS: ***

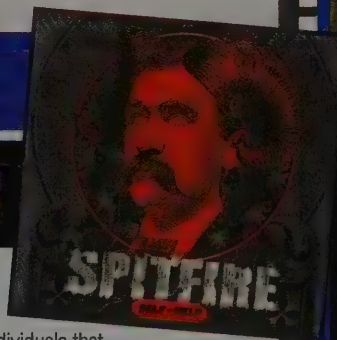
FOR FANS OF: U2, Catch 22

BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE The Poison (Trustkill)

Bullet For My Valentine are not another entry in the metalcore sweepstakes. This Welsh quartet, along with like-minded rockers Children of Bodom and Trivium, are leading the classic metal revival by steering clear of moshpit breakdowns. BFMV are resurrecting the dizzying thrash that gave Metallica their liftoff in the early '80s. On **The Poison**, BFMV rip and shred with galloping guitar solos, and singer Matt Tuck belts more than a few high notes. The title track and *4 Words (To Choke Upon)* fire on all pistons, and are classic without being stale, retro retreads. BFMV update a beloved sound, thanks to fresh, fast guitar leads and intimidating vocal screams.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Trivium, Children Of Bodom



among those cerebral types who continually bemoan the subsequent "dumbing down" of the hard rock form. Well, not leaving well enough alone, these Seattle rockers couldn't resist the temptation to update and complete the story-line begun on their original opus via **Operation: mindcrime II**. This time around, the tale (involving religious zealots in a future society) is even more convoluted and hard to follow than before. But the playing is great, and Geoff Tate's powerful voice sounds as vital as ever. In summary: For true 'Ryche-heads only.

RATING: ***

Queensryche were always one of those bands that I found a little hard to grasp. They were the "thinking man's" metal band in an era where mousse-abusing, party-hearty excess seemed to rule. They always wanted to be taken "seriously" at a time when most rock fans just wanted to have fun! Now, in 2006, this hallowed unit returns with **Operation: mindcrime II**, a disc that once again asks us to put aside our more basic rock and roll instincts and listen to the music with our hearts and minds. Hmmm... too much work for me.

RATING: ***

LACUNA COIL, KARMACODE

Lacuna Coil has drawn a great deal of media attention over the last few years — admittedly as much for the stunning beauty of vocalist Christina Scabbia as for this Italian unit's strange classical/metal hybrid. On their latest release, **Karmacode**, the LC crew once again present one of the most unique musical



LACUNA COIL

attention to the band's incredible music. **Karmacode** stands as a major step forward for a band already well ahead of the pack. RATING: ****

GODSMACK, IV

When Godsmack first hit the hard rock world in the late '90s with their multi-platinum, self-titled debut disc, they were like a true breath of fresh air. With their propulsive beats, hypnotic rhythms and the almost animalistic intensity brought to the proceedings by vocalist Sully Erna, they were the Kings of the New Metal Scene. Now, nearly a decade later, Godsmack's sound seems surprisingly dated. Yes, it's still as raw as an open wound and as vital as ever, but on this Boston-based band's latest release, **IV**, they seem to be treading water. Their feel for writing commercially-oriented, easily digestible pieces of pure metal energy remains as strong as ever. But when cast along-side a new generation of metal mashers, Godsmack seems almost quaint. RATING: ***

Of all the late '90s bands (and the likes of Powerman 5000, Adema and Limp Bizkit jump instantly to mind), Godsmack has remained the most focused, effective and successful. That's a pattern they seem almost certain to maintain with **IV**, an album that presents all the "classic" 'Smack ingredients—great songs, great singing and great playing. This is the kind of album you can play over and over again, hearing something new and exciting with each successive spin. RATING: ****

amalgams in the contemporary hard rock world... and they do so with decidedly mixed results. While such songs as *Our Truth* and *Without A Reason* present fascinating song structures and intriguing instrumental and vocal interplay, too many of this disc's other tracks fall far short in both categories. Perhaps Lacuna Coil will become metal's Next Big Thing (or at least remain a contender as long as Ms. Scabbia continues to flash her pearly whites), but on a purely musical level they don't hold a candle to countless other current high-energy bands. RATING: ***

Let's say it right off—I LOVE Lacuna Coil. Their Euro-flavored style may initially hit some State-side metal fans the wrong way, but with repeated listenings there's no question that this ranks as one of the most ambitious and creative bands around. While many in the rock press have latched on to the band for obvious reasons (Cristina Scabbia ain't hard on the eyes), these same supporters would be doing us all a great disservice if they didn't soon change the focus of their

Quick Reviews

Past Reviews At A Glance

**STAIN'D,
CHAPTER V**
RATING: ***

**BRUCE DICKIN-
SON, TYRANNY
OF SOULS**
RATING: ****

**DIO,
EVIL OR DIVINE**
RATING: ***

**STATIC-X,
START A WAR**
RATING: ****

**TWISTED SISTER,
LIVE AT WACKEN**
RATING: ***

**THE ROLLING
STONES,
A BIGGER
BANG**
RATING: ***

**ROBERT
PLANT,
MIGHTY
REARRANGER**
RATING: ****

**DREDG,
CATCH WITHOUT
ARMS**
RATING: ***

**SYSTEM OF A
DOWN,
HYPNOTIZE**
RATING: ****

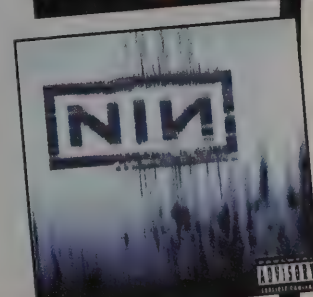
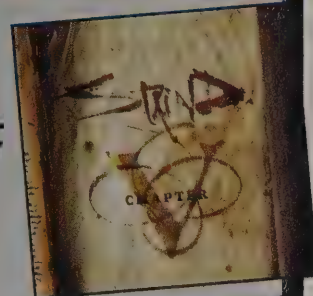
**NINE INCH
NAILS,
WITH TEETH**
RATING: ****

**AUDIOSLAVE,
OUT OF EXILE**
RATING: ****

**SEETHER,
KARMA &
EFFECT**
RATING: ***

**JUDAS PRIEST,
ANGEL OF
RETRIBUTION**
RATING: ****

**MUDVAYNE,
LOST AND
FOUND**
RATING: ***





Korn: Is rock dead?

KORN: Korn frontman Jonathan Davis continues to laugh at those hard rock purists who criticize the band's decision to feature "rap" superstars like Snoop Dogg in their new video *Twisted Transistor*. The band's logic? Simple! "Just look at MTV," Davis said. "How many rock videos do you see them playing? Not many. How many rap videos do you see them playing? A lot! So it wasn't that tough a decision to try and do something creative by having rap stars portray us in our video. We thought it was kind of cool, and apparently so do a lot of other people."

DARKNESS: Tongues are wagging throughout the record biz over the relatively slow sales start enjoyed by the Darkness' latest disc, *One Way Ticket To Hell... And Back*. One of the primary reasons may be that the band has steadfastly refused to do much of anything (especially in America) to support the disc's release. "They haven't done interviews," said our on-the-scene source. "I don't know if it's because they think they're 'too big' to do them... or if they're too confused by how it all works. Either way, it spells trouble for them. They needed to do whatever was necessary to get their career momentum back... and they haven't done it."

PRIEST: What's next for Judas Priest? Following the release of their "reunion" disc, *Angel of Retribution*, and its subsequent world tour, these ageless British metal aces seem intent on slogging ahead. "We're quite satisfied by the response we received around the world," said guitarist Glenn Tipton. "Some markets were stronger than others, as might be expected. But we emerged from the recording and touring process in very good shape as a band. I think we all look forward to a short rest, and then getting back to doing what Priest does best."

SABBATH: They may finally have been nominated for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, but that's apparently not the most important thing on the agenda

of Black Sabbath bassist Geezer Butler. Recently, the legendary rocker has joined forces with the animal rights activists at PETA to protest the "abusive" manner in which chickens utilized by certain fast food establishments meet their untimely demise. More than 850 million chickens a year meet their end in a very unsavory manner (including live beheadings.... yikes!) and Butler—along with a variety of lesser-light rockers—have joined the

cause to put a stop to such heinous actions.

SLIPKNOT: It appears as if Slipknot drummer Joey Jordison *still* hasn't definitively decided whether to do (or conversely, *not* to do) a second album with his side-project, the Murderdolls. Apparently Jordison seems quite content to play drums for other bands (such as Minstry) during his Knot hiatus, and doesn't seem particularly motivated to once again unleash his retro-rock Dolls upon the metal world. "We did it once," he said. "And it was great. But do I want to do it again? I just don't know. It's got to hit me just right for me to want to do it, and so far it hasn't."

AC/DC: It's no secret that AC/DC fans are starved to hear new music from their favorite band. After all, it's been four years since the band's last studio disc, and rumors concerning the release date of their next studio opus have been floating around for months. So was it really that much of a surprise that the group's loyal followers clamored to hear the "unauthorized" disc, *In the Beginning*, rumored to feature the earliest recordings (1974) the band ever made. These feature brothers Angus and Malcolm Young on guitar with a supporting cast of Dave Evans (vocals), Neil Smith (bass) and Noel Taylor (drums).

SYSTEM OF A DOWN: So how did System of a Down's strategy of releasing *Hypnotize* six months after its companion piece, *Mezmerize*, work out for the band? Well, reviews for the second disc were uniformly strong—perhaps even more positive than they were for their initial offering. In a commercial sense, both discs have now gone platinum, proving that these ever-clever rockers seem to have it *all* figured out. "We didn't want the same

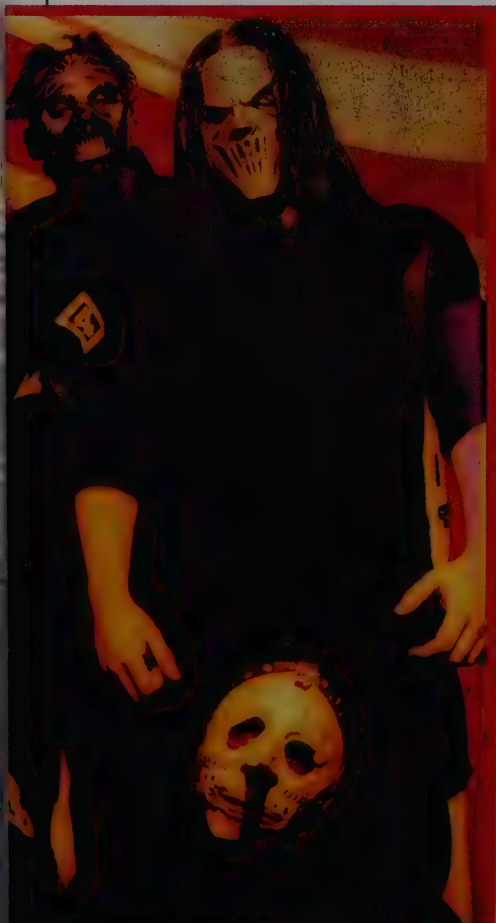


Slipknot: Making decisions.

thing to happen to **Hypnotize** that happened to **Steal This Album**," said guitarist Daron Malakian. "Too many people assumed that one was made up of 'left-overs.' Nothing could have been further from the truth. So this time we let everyone know right from the start that this was a two-disc set... with the two albums coming out at different times."

DISTURBED: David Draiman sees the irony in the fact that he was forced to give up drinking virtually on the eve of Disturbed beginning their headlining run at this year's Jagermeister tour. "I had a bad reaction to some prescribed medication I had been taking," he said. "It was brought on by a lot of drinking I had done at the tail end of our most recent European tour. All-in-all, it wasn't good for me at all—in fact, I felt I was damaging myself and not performing at my best on stage. That was all I needed to realize in order to quit drinking. The music this band makes will *always* come before anything else for me."

AEROSMITH: It appears that spending nearly 18 straight months on the tour trail didn't do wonders for Steven Tyler's voice. In fact, the legendary 58 year-old Aerosmith singer recently underwent surgery that forced the band to cancel the last leg of their most recent U.S. road outing. But fear not Aero fans. It appears like Tyler is already on schedule for a complete recovery, and these hallowed Boston Bad Boys should be ready to enter the recording studio later this year to begin work on their eagerly anticipated new album. "Despite Aerosmith's desire to keep the tour going as long as possible," a band spokesperson said. "Tyler's doctors advised him not to continue performing to give his voice time to recover."



BREAKING NEWS

BY LOU O'NEILL, JR.

ON DEADLINE: SO MUCH to say...so little space. Let the presses roll. It's just crossed the Rock Wire lines and it's totally Tool. Yes, the news is good. Though the name of the CD is still clouded in mystery, the band's first effort since 2001's **Lateralus** is ready to drop even as you read these words. Bobby Ludwig finished up the mastering just weeks ago at Gateway Studios in Portland, Maine.

So, what to expect??? Close sources say the new CD is "the edgiest music that Tool has ever created." Furthermore, adds our well-embedded snoop, "Adam (Jones) has pulled out all the stops on this one. His guitar playing will amaze and delight at the same time!"

Phew!!! Now, let's see if Tool really has the chops or not. Incidentally, don't be surprised if Tool tools into your town any day now. An international press tour is in the works. Live dates are set to begin shortly. Your ancient scribbler will make a hard and fast prediction: After years of hard work and incredible dedication, Tool's time has come.

QUICKIE QUIZ: Ah...it's Spring...and a young man's fancy turns to...hey, we better not go further (pick your own poison?), but since it is Spring we posed a rather difficult query last month. In the entire history of recorded Major League Baseball, how many perfect games have been hurled??? Correct ans.: 17! If you wish to take it a step further, that's one PG for every 151,000 games played. This month, we'll show mercy. Name the only four states in America that begin and end with the same letter. That fiendish howl you distinctly hear in the distance is your intrepid reporter. Try and crunch that one out!!!

NO NAMES PLEEZE: That Irish rock star who's so committed to saving the world is acting...well...sort of strange. After meeting with the President, all the journalists at the White House were sternly warned not to make eye contact with the famous yapper. It has never happened before and it's too bad the Washington press corps didn't nip this one up in the bud!

ROCK WIRE REPORT: Velvet Revolver is planning a top-secret concept album that will be sure to turn heads. Meantime, Scott Weiland is giving Hollywood a try as he'll star in a new film from Joe Carnahan, the acclaimed director of *Narc*. Then there's Weiland's haunting autobiography, *Desperation No. 5*. Scott lets it really all hang out and frankly discusses his addiction to "H" and the fact that he's bi-polar. It's one of the most honest tomes out there right now...A special Happy Birthday wish to Nirvana's Krist Novoselic. He's 41 on May 16th. We fondly remember what a great time we had with Kurt, Dave and Krist at "Rock in Rio" more years ago than we care to admit. If only EVERY Nirvana gig had been digitally preserved...

We kid you not...Jimmy Page has been

Knighted by her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth for his work with impoverished youngsters. So, it's Sir James, might you play *Stairway now?*...Not our regular beat, but, a flash from Hollywood. Who's that squeaky-clean teenage mega-star who was busted for heavy snowplowing in Miami recently? Money made the whole mess disappear like "poof!"...Ozzy has said "Enough is enough" and told his ever-loving Sharon he was tired of takeout grub and ordered his wife to learn how to cook. You



can't make this stuff up!...Tommy Lee raised the eyebrows of the extreme Christian Right when he proclaimed to the men and women of the Fourth Estate, "I like being THE party, rather than just being at the party!" A prominent soul saver went ultra-whack-a-ding-hoy after reading Tommy's tales...

Roadrunner Records has decided that Slipknot's self-titled debut CD will definitely NOT be re-released with "hidden" bonus tracks...The Strokes could all collect Social Security, but, that didn't stop the blue noses at ABC from censoring two out of three Super Bowl tunes. The Lords of the net refused to let Jagger joke, "You'd make a dead man come!!!" How shocking! Still, the Sun managed to rise the following morning!

OVER 'N' OUT: Sully Erna is said by pals to be over-the moon regarding the way the new CD turned out. Say this for sure, **IV** is radically different for Godsmack. Some of the tunes have a Tool-ish feel to them, and still others are pure Godsmack. Check out *Shine Down* and *Voodoo Tool*. Definitely a new progressive step for the band...The numbers are just in. Heavy metal sold an incredible 70 million CD's in 2005. So much for those morons who sneer that metal is dead...Don't tell a soul, but, Axl Rose is acting stranger and stranger with each passing day. Close chums are greatly concerned...Personal to Richie Sambora: You've been thru much more than this. Take a step back old friend, look at the big picture and you'll realize that you really are just another victim...It's all so weird, but Richie stay strong for Ava.

SEE YOU NEXT MONTH. Until then, remember: The most difficult person in the world to know is yourself!

"Success is such a transitory concept."

For most rock bands, success means everything. It dictates the size of their ever-expanding egos. It allows them to live the high-and-mighty lifestyle that many rockers feel is their birth right. It provides them with a forum through which to express their occasionally askew views on a never-ending variety of world-impacting topics. Yes, for most rock bands, success is the very essence of their being.

How ironic it is then, that for a band like System of a Down, a group with something truly important to say, and a brilliant way of saying it, success is little more than a by-product of their endeavors. If truth be known, it really matters little to vocalist Serj Tankian, bassist Shavo Odadjian, guitarist Daron Malakian and drummer John Dolmayan whether their albums sell a million copies or ten million copies. Oh sure, they *want* to be successful.... who wouldn't? After all, the more successful you are, the more fans can be exposed to your beliefs, ideas and ideals. If you don't believe us, just go ask a band like U2! But the level of System's commercial acclaim seems to have amazingly little impact on the degree of self-worth this politically-savvy, Los Angeles based unit allows themselves to experience.

"When you get right down to it, success is such a transitory concept," Tankian said. "It's never been what motivates us. We know we're a little different that way. In all honesty, I don't even think about it unless someone asks me about it. Being a Rock Star has never been a priority to any of us. We didn't begin this band with the aspirations of becoming rich and famous. It was about having our music heard. That's still what motivates us."

"You just can't listen to the accolades that are given you," added Dolmayan. "If you do, you run the risk of starting to believe them. Your focus must always remain on the music. If you don't keep your focus there, you're no longer grounded. You lose your focus, and once you do that, you risk losing your entire identity. I feel it's safe to say at this point in our careers that such a fate isn't about to befall any of us."

Losing the core of their well-crafted artistic identity seems to be about the last thing on the minds of System of a Down in early 2006. With the success of their recent one-two album punches, *Mezmerize* and *Hypnotize*, this left-leaning unit has once again proven that they stand head-and-shoulders above their hard rocking compatriots in terms of both musical acumen and societal insight. But rather than having such facts deter their march to commercial nirvana, it seemingly has spurred it on!

Indeed, this band has now sold an astounding total of 15 million albums during their decade-long career—a time period during which they have released five discs, including 1996's *System of a Down*, 2000's *Toxicity* and 2002's *Steal This Album*.

Yet for all their acclaim, the members of System remain a decidedly different breed of rock and roll animal. These guys don't necessarily look like your "average" rock stars... and they certainly don't act like them. Oh sure, Malakian may favor wearing what appears to be a snake skin jacket from time to time, and the rest of the band

clearly enjoys appearing as "unconventional" as possible. But when it comes to rock star attitude, such a "beast" seems to have been banned from the System camp. So as this Armenian/American unit continue along the tour trail in support of *Hypnotize* and *Mezmerize* (both of which made Number One chart debuts upon their respective 2005 releases), once again they want everyone's focus to be on their music and their message, rather than on the purveyors themselves.

"What's good about our music is that it can be listened to on a number of levels," Dolmayan said. "You can just crank it up and enjoy it, or you can delve into the lyrics and reach an entirely different level. It's up to you. Nobody is insisting that you have to agree with everything we say or do. We've never tried to hit you over the head with everything we believe. It's mixed in there with material that has no political agenda at all. There are some very funny songs on this albums that have absolutely no message other than what you hear. I know that some people may try to delve in and give those songs some extra meaning, but I can assure you that they're not there. But then there are others that do have a very pointed message."

No matter how one may choose to "digest" System's ever-clever lyrical messages, the simple fact of the matter is that few bands in recent memory have continually managed to tickle public sentiment with the skill of this multi-faceted quartet. Despite the unabashed heaviness of their approach, and the decidedly liberal bent of their musical rants, SOAD have effectively managed to cross-over that mysterious boundary that too-often serves to separate hard rock bands from the music masses. Such recent songs as *Cigaro* have actually managed to reach the rock and roll mainstream via a variety of radio and television outlets. Even fans who would generally rather be caught dead than listening to a heavy metal band on their I-pod, seem to embrace System of a Down like a long-lost love. It's a phenomenon this unit both recognizes and appreciates.

"The diversity of our audience never ceases to amaze me," Tankian said. "You look out and see everything from guys in black leather jackets pumping their fists in the air to couples holding hands. That's very satisfying because it shows that our music is reaching a wide variety of people. That is all you can ever honestly hope your music can do... reach out and touch as many people as possible. We seem to be accomplishing that goal more with these albums than ever before."

"It always made me laugh a bit when I hear people call us a 'metal' band," Dolmayan added. "There's certainly nothing wrong with that, and many of my favorite bands fall into that category. But to my way of thinking it really doesn't fit us. Just because we play loud doesn't mean that we should be so easily classified. I think the people who are doing that aren't really listening to our music. Those that are listening closely seem to sense that there's a lot more going on within this band than something that can simply be classified in a word or two."

SYSTEM OF A DOWN TAKING ON THE WORLD

BY P.J. MERKLE

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

FAVORITE ALBUM—SOAD

SYSTEM OF A DOWN

HP

Disturbed's David Draiman knows better than most that the rock world can be a tricky place to call home. One minute you're riding high as the poster boy for the so-called New Metal Explosion. The next, you're being questioned in regard to the long-term impact your band's music will make. But after more than five years of successfully riding the cresting ebbs and flows of rock and roll popularity, the shaven-headed vocalist seems quite content to deal with whatever fate may befall both he and his banmates, guitarist Dan Donegan and drummer Mike Wengren. So as this Chicago-based hard rock unit continue to support their third studio collection, **Ten Thousand Fists**, Draiman rests comfortably knowing that he's done all that he possibly

Actually, it would be almost impossible to single out the one key ingredient that has spurred on Disturbed's surge to platinum-coated popularity. Oh sure, this unit's ability to present a look, a sound and a style that is uniquely their own has played a vital role in determining their present place in the hard rock hierarchy. But it is also their ability to choose just the right tours, make just the right videos, and pique the interest of just the right media moguls that has helped grease their path to the top. The ever-savvy Draiman is well aware that a wide variety of ingredients have gone into the mystical, magical musical brew that has led his unit to the rock and roll promised land.

"Right now, the only thing we're thinking about is how we can incorporate an album's worth of

"Even when we finished recording **Believe** we weren't sure we had captured all the energy and power that we wanted," Donegan said. "We felt confident, but we had no way of knowing for sure... at least until we started to see the way the fans were reacting to it. Then we knew for sure. This time, with **Ten Thousand Fists**, when we began recording, it was with more confidence than ever before."

Obviously, the members of Disturbed know that the eyes and ears of the rock world will now be more focused upon them than ever before. As one might expect, there are already some within the rock community who are predicting some sort of fan "backlash" against Disturbed—much as has happened to the likes of Metallica and Korn in recent years. These nay-sayers point to the disappointing



BY STAN WINTERS

can to insure his group's continued success.

"I've learned that there are some things I can control... and some things I can't," he said. "I guess the trick is to focus as much energy as possible on those things that you can control and let everything else take its natural course. If people choose to embrace us with this album, we'll certainly welcome it. If they chose to make us prove ourselves all over again, I'm sure we'll accept the challenge."

With their two previous discs, 2000's **The Sickness** and 2002's **Believe**, having sold a combined total of over four million copies, and their various *Music As A Weapon* road outings proving to be among that year's top-grossing events, Disturbed has certainly been up for any challenge placed in their path. Despite what some media-types viewed as a "softening" of the band's hard-edged style on their sophomore outing (something radically changed on **Ten Thousand Fists**), there's no denying that the last few years have been a time filled with both critical battles and commercial success for this eclectic quartet. But if truth be known, these ever-confident Midwesterners wouldn't have had it any other way.

"From the time we all got together, we always expected to accomplish big things," Draiman said. "It wasn't so much an ego thing as a real belief in ourselves and in what we were doing. We never tried to follow the 'standard' rules; we always did things our own way, and that's been a big part of our success."

incredible new songs into our live set," he said.

"We're not concerned with what kind of clothes we should wear to the next photo shoot. Our energy is totally focused on the music, which is exactly where it should be."

As was true with each of their previous discs, **Ten Thousand Fists** made a chart-topping debut last September, at which time this hard-charging unit turned their attentions from the studio to the stage. Indeed, much of Disturbed's on-stage intensity has been captured on their recently released **Music As A**

performance of recent albums from the likes of Saliva, Static-X and Sevendust to note that the latest metal resurgence has already peaked. For their part, the Disturbed guys want to hear none of this.

"We can't worry about anything like that," Draiman said. "We believe that great songs will be heard at any time. We know that we came along at a good time. But we also believe that our fans will still be there for us with this one."

The brand of over-the-top fan support of which Draiman speaks started almost from the moment that this unit's first disc hit the streets nearly five years ago. Indeed, since their ear-popping introduction, being able to nimbly push the "buttons" of their faithful following has become

something of an art for Disturbed. With their recent tours drawing wide-ranging praise (and criticism) for their controversial use of hate-crime videos and visuals of various historical atrocities, these rockers seem to possess little fear when it comes time to tweak the nose of mainstream society. But Disturbed's efforts have never been without due cause and effect. Indeed, Draiman and his boys knew *exactly* the kind of ruckus they were causing along the tour trail.

"The images in those videos were disturbing," he said. "But that's always been the essence of this band, to show that not all of us think alike or act alike. That can be good, or it can be bad, but it is an undeniable reality."

"If people embrace this album, we'll certainly welcome that."

Weapon II DVD—a collection that captures the high-flying energy that continually characterizes this Disturbed-headlined road outing. Indeed, it is Disturbed's lethal combination of bold, rugged, totally unpredictable sounds, and an equally visceral, pulsating live show that together have transformed this unit into one of the hottest commodities the hard rock world has seen in a long time. Thanks to the constant airplay enjoyed by such older songs as *Stupify*, *Believe* and *Down With The Sickness*, as well as new faves like *Just Stop* and *Stricken*, this unit has clearly established themselves as one of the most entertaining and important groups currently inhabiting the hard rock scene.



BEST TOUR—DISTURBED

DISTURBED

HP

THE DARKNESS

BY WINSTON CUMMINGS

WATCHING THEIR STEP

The Darkness have been to the mountain top... and they almost fell off once they got there. Less than a year after their debut disc, *Permission to Land*, shot to the apex of chart success around the globe (including selling more than 600,000 copies in the U.S.), these retro-rock English jocks come this close to crashing and burning. But rather than giving in to the temptations presented by taking the easy route out of their rock and roll mess, vocalist/guitarist Justin Hawkins and his guitar-toting brother Dan realigned their troops and forged ahead, in the process creating the Darkness' aptly titled new disc, *One Way Ticket to Hell... And Back*. It has indeed been a wild ride for the Hawkins boys, who along with drummer Ed Graham and new bassist Richie Edwards, comprise the core of this band that has drawn both the raves and the wrath of media types from London to L.A. for their "vintage" sound that has been compared to the likes of AC/DC and Queen. Once again on *One Way Ticket... the Darkness* show what all the fuss is about, a fact we recently discussed with Justin and Dan.

Hit Parader: *One Way Ticket To Hell... And Back* is certainly an intriguing title. What's the story behind it?

Justin Hawkins: That pretty much sums up what the last year of our lives has been like. We've been to hell, and thankfully we've come back more or less in one piece. You name a problem and we've had it— fear, paranoia, hatred, pressure. They were all there for us. Some were external, brought on by the fact that we had become the most successful English rock band in a decade. And some were internal, and those came close to doing us in even before we had the chance to release a second album. If that's not a one way ticket to hell, then I don't know what is.

Dan Hawkins: It had reached the point where it became difficult for us to function on a day-to-day basis, especially in England. Paparazzi would stake out in front of our homes and follow our every move. We're very proud that we sold nearly two million copies of *Permission to Land* just in England, but we paid the price for it. So we went into my home studio in Lowescroft late in 2004 to try and get away from the scrutiny of London, and to see what we could come up with musically. I must admit that at first it didn't go very well.

HP: There were rumors going around about a year ago that the Darkness were on the verge of breaking up. How close did you actually get to that fate?

JH: Well, I did walk out of our recording sessions at one point. I was ready to throw it all away and do something else with my life. Everything had just gotten to be a bit too much—the pressure, the constant media attention, the fighting that was going on within the band. I didn't want it anymore, so I walked away. The rest of the band kept going, and they did virtually all of the backing tracks on the album without me around.

DH: It was a difficult situation, to say the least. Justin had vanished, leaving the rest of us to forge ahead with the creation of a new album. We were virtually split up for a long period when we began work on *One Way Ticket To Hell... and Back*. But I hoped that things would work out, so I kept things together as best I could and just forged ahead.

Hit Parader: What eventually got everyone back on the same page?

JH: Two things. The first was that I began to hear what the band was creating in the studio, and I knew I had to be part of it. I would hear the magic that was present even on the early tracks, and I knew that I had

to be part of what was being done. The second reason was that I finally realized exactly what, or should I say *who*, was at the heart of the problem I was having, and we took measures to remedy that problem. Our former bassist (Frankie Poullain) was fired and we hired a new one. **DH:** Yeah, Richie is my former guitar tech, so he's been around this band for a long time. He understands what we're trying to do, and he made it a very easy transition. As soon as he stepped in, things started to smooth out within the band both on a musical and personal level.

HP: You worked with Roy Thomas Baker on this album. His previous credits include the likes of Queen, the Stones, to the Who. How did that go?

JH: I say it over and over again... Roy Thomas Baker is a genius. There really isn't anything more to say. He's been involved with making so much great music throughout his career for a very good reason—he's the very best at what he does. It was a true honor to work with him, and a true privilege to watch him work on a daily basis.

DH: At first it can almost be a bit intimidating to work with someone like that because you know how intimately involved he's been in creating some of the music that we all love so much. It's almost like you don't want to do anything that would be embarrassing in front of him. But once we all settled in, things went very well. He definitely brought the best out of us.

HP: You've already conquered Europe. Is America the next target?

DH: The problem is that Europe, especially England, can be a very tricky place when it comes to maintaining any degree of success. The English media loves to build you up, just so they can take you down. It's been that way forever over here. We're not taking anything for granted with this album. We're certainly not going back to Square One, but we're not immediately planning on playing outdoor stadiums, either. We're ready to take it at a slow and steady pace all over the world.

JH: I think we have more growth potential in America than anywhere else. We feel like we have a lot of unfinished business there. Things were building quite nicely with *Permission to Land*, then they came to a rather crashing halt. We need to go back there and make sure we regain our momentum. Make no mistake about it, our goal this time is for total world domination... and nothing less.

"We've been to HELL, and hopefully we've come back."

FAVORITE VIDEO BAND—THE DARKNESS



THE DARKNESS

HP

"This is the album I've always wanted to make."

BY TOM LONG

There was a brief instant in rock and roll time when Buckcherry seemed like they were ready to take over the world. That moment occurred back in 1999, when this L.A.-based riff-rock unit was scoring big with the AC/DC-meets-Aerosmith styled *Lit Up*, a track drawn from their heavily-touted, self-titled debut disc. But alas, after selling more than 500,000 copies, and generating more than its share of media attention, that first album seemed to quickly run out of steam. The group followed up that initial success in 2001 with a far more generic sophomore effort, *Time Bomb*, and soon after that, frontman Joshua Todd and his crew seemed to disappear from sight.

Oh sure, there was a Todd solo disc that slipped through the cracks in 2002, and those rumors back in '03 that the heavily tattooed singer had been working with Slash and Duff in the band that eventually turned out to be Velvet Revolver. But when he lost out on that frontman gig to Scott Weiland, many within the hard rock community believed that we had seen the last of Todd's music making days. Now, however, with a reconstituted version of Buckcherry around him (featuring hold-over guitarist Keith Nelson along with newcomers Xavier Muriel on drums, Steve D. on guitar and Jimmy Ashhurst on bass) Todd and his crew have unleashed *Fifteen*, a fitting return for a band that quite obviously is not yet prepared to let go of their rock and roll dreams.

"This band is such a part of me that I just can't let go," Todd said. "It's been four years since our last album—four wild and crazy years. But this version of Buckcherry is amazingly strong, and we've already been road tested by touring Japan with Motley Crue and playing every show we can throughout the L.A. area. It's all made for this to be the album I've always wanted this band to make."

So after already been prematurely hailed as "the Guns 'N' Roses of the late '90s," already being labeled as a "menace to society" due to their party-hearty musical messages, and already being called the band that just may save rock and roll from all its various ills and spills, it's time for Buckcherry to prove themselves all over again. With their tattooed beat messiah image, their fondness for pumping guitar riffs and their avowed love of the good life, with *Fifteen* Todd and his boys hope to once again be considered among the leading standard-bearers for hard-chargin', fist-pumpin', heart-thumpin' rock energy—the exact kind of music which, according to some industry pundits, had been on the endangered species list in recent years.

"We want all the people who tried to hold us down, all the people who tried to tell us how to live to once again feel the Buckcherry wrath," Todd said. "We want everyone who kept telling us to forget about what we were doing and get

real jobs to just choke on it. People always try to take away your energy and put you down. But we've never bit on any of that. We want to surround ourselves with people who get off on what we're doing—people who enjoy the energy of rock and roll."

For those pseudo-intellectual 21st Century poseurs who honestly believed they had finally laid to rest the hard rock "menace" and replaced it with their cutting-edge, synthetic industrial icons and sweet-sounding pop divas, the return of a band like Buckcherry must feel like a cold slap in the face. Thanks to new songs like *Crazy Bitch*, this go-for-the-throat So Cal quintet has started to reawaken the hormone-driven rock energies housed within millions of America's youth. For too long those rampant energies have laid dormant, suppressed by the "gangsta" elements of rap and the too-quirky-for-words stylings of emo. Make no mistake about it, big-time rock and roll is once again alive and well, and Buckcherry are doing their best to play a big-time role in its resurgence.

"I think we've got a lot of different things going on in our music that serves to separate us from anything that's gone on before," Nelson said. "Yeah, we were influenced by AC/DC and Kiss—what real rock band wasn't? But we were also influenced by everyone from Iggy Pop to Prince—it's all in there someplace."

BUCKCHERRY

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SLIPKNOT

THE FUTURE FILE

BY TED PARKER

The notion that they've now attained "legendary" status does not sit particularly well upon the shoulders of Slipknot. It's not as if these mask-wearing midwestern rockers don't appreciate the idea that they're now widely hailed as the "saviors" of the early 21st Century heavy metal scene. Nor do d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Gray, guitarist James Root, drummer Joey Jordison, keyboardist Craig Jones, percussionist Chris Fehn, percussionist Shawn "Clown" Crahan, guitarist Mick Thomson and vocalist Corey Taylor deny the degree of impact they've had in shaping the cultural and musical perspectives of their millions of "maggots"—those died-in-the-wool Knot-heads who revel in every word, sound and deed that emanates out of the Slipknot camp.

Yet, despite all that they've accomplished—including three consecutive platinum albums (*Slipknot Iowa* and *Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses*), a string of sold-out world tours, and a recent in-concert disc, *9.0 Live*, that captures the insane intensity of a Knot performance, these Des Moines-based rockers still apparently feel uncomfortable under the crown that precariously sits atop their collective head. It's not that they lack either confidence or perspective regarding their accomplishments. It's just that too often they still feel like the "B market" boys they once were. Indeed, in the case of Slipknot, the old saying is invariably true: you can take the boy out of the small town, but you can't take the small town out of the boy.

"We still live in Des Moines for a reason," Taylor said. "It's a big part of who we are. That will never change. After all the touring and traveling, that's still home for us. That's where we go back to. You develop a very different kind of personality, and a very different kind of self-awareness when you grow up in a place like Iowa. In New York, L.A. or any other big urban center, it's just not the same. In places like that, everything is right there for you, it's almost too easy. You walk across the street to a movie. You have ten restaurants to choose from on the same block. In Iowa, it's not like that. It's so bleak and dreary. You've got to fight to develop who and what you are. I think in some ways that's a better environment. We were just placed in Iowa and told to make the best of it. It made us get angry and revolt against almost everything we saw and heard. I don't know if we could have done that in a big city... at least not in the same way. We weren't intimidated to try it in Iowa. We sat around our houses and let our imaginations run wild. To put it simply, Iowa is Slipknot, and Slipknot is Iowa."

Despite the inherent difficulties presented by their small-town roots, this Nine Man Mutant Metal Army has had an amazing impact on the world at-large. From Tokyo to Topeka, the intentionally hideous faces of the Knot patrol are known, loved and reviled. For Slipknot, every day of their lives presents a unique opportunity to take their twisted, tattered and torn musical message to the fans of Planet Earth. Whether they do that by performing on stage in front of tens of thousands at each show they give, or through the lyrics featured on each of their chart-topping albums, these hallowed musical miscreants have effectively created a legacy of lunacy that few acts in metal history can match. For 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8, the hostility and anger that rages within their collective soul emerges in music that serves as a true cultural forum. It is

through that music that they can express their views of society's ills, in the process placing a mirror up to American culture, reflecting each of our shared strengths and weaknesses.

"At this point in our career, after three successful albums and who-knows how many successful tours, I think we've learned what works best for us," Taylor said. "Earlier in our career, the power of the music just went everywhere, like it was coming out of a shotgun. Now, it's more like a laser beam. All that energy and anger goes exactly where we point it. That's what we enjoy. We've done exactly what we wanted to do, and we're very satisfied with that. We've had the chance to tour with this music, and see how the fans reacted to it, and that's also been very satisfying. But the quality of the music is what's at the base of everything. Things became so much more focused for us over the last few years. It was like we saw the light and really went after it."

Apparently "seeing the light" has paid some incredible dividends for Slipknot. With sales for *Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses* at nearly the two million mark world wide, *9.0 Live* adding another million units to that impressive total, and the band having performed nearly 250 live shows since that disc's release in May, 2004, it is estimated that the Knot have grossed in excess of \$15 million over the last two years. Sure, you've got to divide that number by nine (and then subtract for managers, booking agents, etc.) but it's still not a bad haul for a bunch of guys who admit that their spending tastes remain rather conservative—at least in a rock and roll context.

"I don't think any of us has gone crazy when it comes to spending money," Taylor said. "I bought a nice car a few years ago, but it was nothing extravagant. Because there are so many of us in the band, and because we're never going to be the kind of band that sells a really incredible number of albums, there are limitations to what we can make—but we're not complaining. We're doing exactly what we want, and we're being compensated very well for it."

Of course, there are some within the rock community who will point to the once-brewing tensions that almost tore Slipknot asunder a few years back as proof that money alone can never hold a band together. In fact, Taylor is one of the first to agree with that assessment. He, along with his bandmates, well know that it's their shared sense of purpose, as well as their unique artistic vision that have held the Knot together and cemented their preeminent position within the rock hierarchy.

"It's impossible to point to one factor—other than the music itself—and say that's why we're doing this," the singer said. "There is the friendship and the success, but it is more than that. I think we love the feeling we have when we're together—it's a 'go for it' edge that's really compelling. Even after all these years, that's still an essential part of who we are. This isn't an act for us, it's a true representation of the people in this band. I don't have any fear that we'll ever lose that edge. If we ever begin to lose it, then we simply won't exist any more. The musical beast that is Slipknot needs the kind of energy and attitude that we bring to it, or it will die. That could happen tomorrow, or it might never happen, you never know for sure."



MOST OUTRAGEOUS BAND—SLIPKNOT

**"At this point in
our career,
we've learned
what works best
for us."**

SLIPKNOT



OZZY

COVERING HIS ASSETS

OSBOURNE

BY RYAN HARDING

Ozzy Osbourne sat fidgeting behind a desk in one of his record company's plush West Coast offices. He remained virtually oblivious—though always polite—to the various label upstarts and executives who came by to pay homage to the Metal Godfather. Rather than engaging his various admirers in lengthy conversations about his latest album, *Under Cover*, or providing intimate details about his ever-more-public personal life, he nervously played with anything he could lay his hands on. A pencil? Ozzy broke it. A newspaper? Ozzy shuffled it. A diet soda? Ozzy drank it...and then peeled off the label. To say that the Oz appeared a bit hyperactive would rank among the decade's grand understatements. In fact, it often seemed as if he was a tightly wound ball of nervous energy that refused to sit still for more than a few minutes at a time. His concentration wandered while he was talking, often changing direction in mid-thought. It was "classic" Ozzy.

There's no doubt that hangin' out with Mr. John "Ozzy" Osbourne remains one of rock's most unique experiences. One second he may be discussing his life at home with the wife and kids, and the next—with absolutely no prompting from any outside source—he's moved into a conversation concerning the merits of industrial metal. After more than 35 years in the rock and roll biz, Ozzy is still just as engaging, energizing and enigmatic as he was when Black Sabbath's debut disc was released all the way back in 1970! But when you get right down to it, what besides a chronic case of hyperactivity could account for a 55 year-old guy who's still ready, willing and able to play some of the heaviest music on earth? Yup, Ozzy's personality, his very mode of existence, is still intimately entwined with the music he makes. And as evidenced on *Under Cover*—which as the name implies, features the Ozz' take on some of rock and roll's all-time classic tunes—the Ozz has never been more in love with both his music and his life than he is in 2006.

"I like what I do," he said. "There are times when I may say that I want to do something else, but that doesn't last for long. One day I'll express interest in something to (his wife/manger) Sharon, and as soon as I do

she'll look me in the eye and ask, 'Is that what you *really* want to do?' I'll think about it, and most of the time I forget about doing it right then. That's just the way I am. I remember when a number of years ago I started collecting various things and began working on a musical. But it still wasn't enough. I wasn't making rock music for the first time in my life, and I really missed that. I don't know if I missed not having people around just to joke with and play music, or if I really missed the hard work and the travel. But I realized you really can't have one without the other."

While getting back on the road isn't on Ozzy's immediate agenda these days—his most recent run with Black Sabbath ended in late 2005 with a highly successful string of European concert performances—there's no question that he's keeping plenty busy. Though he has come out and stated that he will no longer headline his annual *Ozzfest* extravaganza—something he's done (either with Sabbath or as a solo performer) for each of the Fest's previous ten incarnations—there is still much on the docket to keep the Ozz' hyperactive personality occupied. With *Under Cover* already a smash hit, thanks to Ozzy's heart-felt versions of such timeless classics as John Lennon's *Woman*, Joe Walsh's *Rocky Mountain Way* and the Moody Blues' *Go Now*, it seems as if the legendary metal madman is planning to be rather busy in 2006.

"This was a fun album for me to do," Ozzy said. "Much of it stems from material we originally did last year for (the box set) *Price of Darkness*. That's where versions of things like *Mississippi Queen*, *All the Young Dudes* and *Sympathy for the Devil* come from. When we decided to create an album like *Under Cover*, I just decided to add a few of my all-time favorite songs. And then we threw in the DVD *Dinner with Ozzy and Friends* for good measure."

Ahhh, the DVD, a chance for the inimitable Ozz to gather together with some of his closest cronies—such as his son Jack and Motorhead's notorious Lemmy Kilmister—and just shoot the... oh you know darn well what they're shooting! This is one video that must truly be seen to be believed, filled as it is with first-hand accounts of some of the most sordid tales of rock and roll excess in the annals of contemporary music. While he has now thankfully outgrown many of his more outrageous behavioral patterns, there's no question that Ozzy enjoys retelling some of his classic tales... at least the ones he can remember!

"That's one of the worst parts of doing drugs and drinking to excess," he said. "You don't remember a lot of the things you've done. People have to tell you about them the next day, and then you often don't believe them. But I know with me, they were all very true."

Despite the quality and focus that has obviously gone into the creation of both *Under Cover* and *Dinner with Ozzy*, the initial, overwhelmingly positive public response to these efforts has astounded even the seen-it-all, done-it-all Mr.

Osbourne! The disc made a Top 10 debut upon its release last fall, and has already sold well over a million copies. Whether or not it eventually reaches the multi-plat-

inum sales level enjoyed by many of his previous studio albums like *Bark At The Moon*, *Diary Of A Madman* and *Ozzmosis*, remains to be seen. But the fact is that the Ozz has quickly and dramatically proven that despite his lengthy recording absence from the metal world, his amazing commercial powers remain undaunted. Today, with a new generation of hard rock acts battling for recognition, and heavy metal on the verge of once again dominating the sales charts, Ozzy is clearly in his glory. The Metal Godfather's kingdom hasn't been this strong in more than a decade!

"It's great to see how rock and roll has come back so strong," he said. "But I never really had a doubt that it would. It may fade away for a few years, but that's good. It gives the music a chance to revitalize itself and find a new direction. It has come back in a very strong way, and I'm very glad to still be part of it."

"This was a fun album to do... I got to play some of my all-time favorite songs."

FAVORITE METAL ICON—OZZY



OZZY

HP



2005 Modern Drummer Consumer's Poll Results

Most Innovative, Drumsticks
Number One: Pro-Mark

Most Innovative, Miscellaneous Accessories
Number One: Pro-Mark

Best Quality and Craftsmanship, Drumsticks
Number One: Pro-Mark

Best Quality and Craftsmanship, Miscellaneous Accessories
Number One: Pro-Mark

Most Consumer/Service-Oriented Drumstick Company
Number One: Pro-Mark

Thank you to all the readers who voted us Number One.

Manny L. Bernstein
President

KILLSWITCH

METAL'S NEW SUPERSTARS

BY P.J. MERKLE

"The last couple of years have been a total blur to me."

It's the ultimate cliché to say that a band "plays by their own rules." But in the case of Killswitch Engage, such a statement is perhaps the only way of properly communicating the bold, totally unpredictable manner in which this revolutionary heavy metal unit attack their hard rocking craft. For vocalist Howard Jones, guitarists Adam Dutkiewicz and Joel Stroetzel, bassist Mike D'Antonio and drummer Justin Foley, the acclaim heaped upon them for their gold-selling, Grammy nominated 2004 effort, *The End of the Heartache*, served as the crowning achievement of this New England-based unit's career. But now, with the appearance of their new on-the-road DVD, *(Set This) World Ablaze*, the KsE crew have shown that they are clearly not sitting back and resting on their numerous laurels.

Capturing, as it does, countless highlights of the band's dizzying 18 month world tour, *(Set This) World Ablaze* serves as the perfect culmination of what has been the best period in Killswitch's six year career. Featuring such tracks as *The End of Heartache*, *My Last Serenade*, *A Bid Farewell* and *When Darkness Falls*, the DVD captures KsE at the peak on their on-stage powers. It also provides a fascinating contrast for long-time band followers who for the first time have a chance to listen to, and then dissect, Jones' handling of some of this unit's earlier tunes. Having joined the band just prior to the recording of *The End of the Heartache*, Jones quickly proved himself to be the missing ingredient in Killswitch Engage's rage towards mass success. And as they all look back over their shared time on the tour trail, these guys know that they made a stand that may well serve as the highlight of not only their careers, but of their lives!

"This last couple of years have been a total blur to me," Mike D said. "It's amazing to watch this DVD because it brings back a lot of memories... and it shows me things that I had never even seen before! It's strange to realize that there's so much going on during a tour that your totally oblivious of. But I guess that's why a band makes a DVD like this in the first place."

But, as one might expect from a quixotic unit

like KsE, there's a lot more to *(Set This) World Ablaze* than a "mere" live video. There are numerous "extras", including never-before seen interviews, rare backstage moments, and an actual band documentary featuring contributions from their associates in bands such as Slipknot, Lamb of God, Shadows Fall and All That Remains. When taken in its proper cultural context, it's not hard to state that with the release of their new DVD, Killswitch Engage have cemented their position among their hierarchy of the modern metal movement.

"To see the way things have grown for this band over the last few years has been nothing short of amazing," Jones said. "There are times when we stand on stage, with the crowd chanting our name, that you just want to see if you can stop time. It's an incredible feeling, and one for which I know I'll always be appreciative."

In all honesty, the current acclaim that is coming in Killswitch's direction has surprised many—including members of the band themselves. Indeed, it wasn't that long ago that they openly wondered if their career hadn't come to a crashing and highly premature conclusion. This unit felt they had everything going their way when their 2002 disc, *Alive of Just Breathing*, represented their first release on a major label. But just two weeks after that album hit the stands, original lead singer Jesse Leach decided that he had better things to do than tour the world with Killswitch Engage, leaving the band in the kind of precarious position of which many rock and roll nightmares are made. But with the quick recruiting of Jones, this heavy-handed quintet barely missed a step, a fact that they loudly and proudly put on display throughout *The End of the Heartache*.

"This band was placed in a very difficult position, and I'm just glad that I was able to step in and help them out," Jones said. "It was the break of a lifetime for me, and it seems to have worked out fairly well in that we were able to tour a great deal over the last few years."

As shown throughout *The End of Heartache*, the personal turmoil and varied experiences the band suffered through over the last few years only served to further inspire the music created by Killswitch Engage. Powerful, lumbering, insightful and inciteful, throughout that disc this unit created a style that was equal parts "classic metal" stomp and cutting edge romp. In the process, they laid down guitar-driven grooves heavy enough to sink a battleship and hooky enough to grab significant radio airplay. When all was said-and-done, particularly with Jones' gruff-yet-accessible vocals adding just the right elements to the musical mix, after years of struggle and, yes, heartache, Killswitch Engage suddenly found themselves sitting atop the metal kingdom.

"On the album the band managed to get heavier, while also becoming more melodic," Jones noted. "I believe it also has to do with my presence and my particular vocal style, but I have to believe it also has to do with the fact that this band has played together night-after-night for years, and that has a definite impact on the way you approach things."

For many fans, the on-going success of Killswitch Engage mirrors the continuing evolution of the metal form—a style not represented by the likes of Linkin Park and Velvet Revolver, but rather by bands such as Lamb of God and Shadows Fall. With *The End of the Heartache* proving to be one of the most successful "underground" metal albums of all-time, it would seem as if this pace-setting unit has staked a major claim to the title of Metal's Most Influential Young Band. While none of these relatively unassuming guys will go out of his way to banner such talk, neither will any of them shy away from discussing Killswitch Engage's ever-increasing impact on the contemporary music form.

"I don't know if we want to assume any titles or become spokesmen for any musical movement," Jones said. "That's really not our style. We're one of those groups that puts our message in the music we make. But at the same time, there is a change happening in music. And I think it's a very healthy change. If we can be part of that, I don't think we'd have any problems with it."



BEST UNDERGROUND BAND

KILLSWITCH ENGAGE

HP

In a world filled with clone-like imitators and follow-the-leader musical sheep, a band like Tool stands out like a beacon of ultraviolet light in a monochromed field. With the impending release of their new album—the band's first since 2002's *Lateralus*—this freakish, eminently unpredictable West Coast quartet clearly stands as one of hard rock's most intriguing forces. To the eyes and ears of millions, Tool exist as a dark, disturbing unit, one that manages to tweak society's soft underbelly and twist our perceptions of reality with equal aplomb. While in recent years bands like Slipknot and Mudvayne have managed to take the metal form in a more theatrical—and perhaps, more troublesome—direction, the overt musings that these bands bring forth can never come close to matching the level of skin-crawling creepiness that Tool has managed to perfect. For vocalist Maynard James Keenan, guitarist Adam Jones, bassist Justin Chancellor and drummer Danny Carey, the contemporary music form is clearly not designed for party-hearty revelry or minimalist odes of angst-filled rage. Rather, it is an expansive canvas upon which this amazing quartet can create some of the most alarming—albeit entertaining—musical images ever heard by the ears of mortal man.

TOOL CAREFUL PLANNING

BY PETE SLATER

"Some of these songs are very heavy, and others have weird time signatures."

Hit Parader: Where does Tool stand in early 2006?

Danny Carey: In some key ways this album is the next stage in our development. I think we've worked hard to expand what we do—and at the same time we've stayed true to what we are as a band. Some of the songs are very heavy, and others have very weird time signatures. So in that regard it probably isn't that much different from past Tool albums or that different from what fans might expect from us. When we get together, that's the kind of stuff that naturally comes out. We don't put out albums often enough to work very hard to try to change those natural inclinations. This time, the music has gone another step in allowing people to see us as something more than a metal band. There are obviously elements of metal in what we do, but we've never wanted to be limited by that. We always want to expand our musical parameters, and this album definitely does that.

HP: How would you describe Tool to the uninitiated?

Adam Jones: We're four individuals who each have our own opinions. We end up meeting in the middle and producing what you hear as Tool. We treat everything we do in the band—whether it be the album art, the videos, or the promotional posters—with as much thought as we put into the writing and recording of the album. It's part of the whole Tool approach... we take nothing for granted. We take what we do very seriously. It's all about the music for us—music that inspires, and music that creates thought.

Danny Carey: We're one of the few bands that hasn't had to play any lame fashion games. We've always been able to put art first.

Justin Chancellor: I've never come across—or been a part—of a collection of souls so diverse in character and belief. Everyone in this band possesses the ability to mutually accommodate those differences and evolve them into positive creativity. It's still rather ironic to me to think that I first met Tool about ten years ago, and by strange quirks of fate, I've become part of the recipe.

HP: After the success of *Undertow*, *Aenima* and *Lateralus*, did you feel you had to create something extra special this time?

Maynard James Keenan: You can't let any previous work cloud what you're trying to do. We did approach this one somewhat differently because we didn't go into the studio with a lot of finished ideas. When we started to record, there were still a lot of elements that needed to be completed. On our first couple of

albums, we had worked on everything until we knew it backwards and forwards. By working this way, there was a little roughness left around the edges. It gave everything from the recording sessions to the finished songs themselves a more edgy feel. I like that.

DC: One of the goals we set out to accomplish on this record, among a lot of other things, was to make it obvious to all the materialistic idiots out there that energy is primary and the illusion of matter is secondary. Our main goal when we're together is to write music in a forum where we can involve our subconscious as well as our conscious. To make that happen we use every means available to us; they can be various "fragrances" or whatever modern technology can supply. Putting together an album can become a very long, tedious process with us because every idea gets tortured and drawn and quartered. But eventually everything does seem to fall grudgingly into place.

JC: To me, this album is like an amusement park where you can jump on any ride or, alternately, you can swallow the whole tab and be taken hostage. The treatment will be brutal and rigorous and the demands great, but you'll walk away from it saying that you were treated very well. At first we had to spend time finding our feet with each other again until we began realizing our collective vision. Once that was achieved, constipation became a rare concept.

HP: How soon do you think you'll be getting back on the road?

JC: It will be soon—and once it begins, it won't end for a long time. Touring has been really special for us because it's the communion of our music on a much more personal level—it surpasses recording in being able to directly communicate with people.

DC: 90% of touring is waiting. The trick is to turn that waiting into productivity. But going on the road is a necessity for us. No recording can capture what happens in a room with four people who have a similar cause and truly believe in that cause. That's especially true for the way we play. Live is what our band is about. Sometimes I look out and I can't understand exactly why the crowd is responding in a certain way; apparently kids will mosh to anything these days. But there are also those people in the crowd that the music reaches on a deeper psychological and subconscious level. Those are the people with whom we are really trying to communicate.

MOST ANTICIPATED RETURN—TOOL



TOOL

HP

Gavin Rossdale is a name—and a face—readily familiar to just about every follower of the rock and roll scene. Over the last decade, Rossdale's handsome mug has been in near-constant public profile, both for his platinum-covered work with the post-grunge hard rock unit Bush, and more recently as the man lucky enough to be married to pop priestess Gwen Stefani. But now a third criterion can be added to Rossdale's resume, that of member (not necessarily leader) of the exciting heavy rock unit Institute. For Rossdale, the fact that this is more than a solo project (despite the fact that he wrote the songs, and serves as both singer and guitarist for Institute's first disc, *Distort Yourself*) is VERY important. Not only does that fact show Institute to be a true group, it pays proper respect to his new bandmates, guitarist Chris Traynor (formerly of Helmet at Orange 9mm), bassist Cache Tolman, and drummer Charlie Walker. Recently we hooked up with the charismatic-as-ever Mr. Rossdale to discuss his new band, his marriage and the breakup of Bush, among many other topics.

INSTITUTE

GAVIN'S NEXT STEP

BY MIKE DAVIDSON

"My wife and I do our best to avoid the spotlight... when possible."

Hit Parader: Despite not recently being in the musical spotlight, it seems like the last few years have been a very busy time for you.

Gavin Rossdale: I think that's a very safe thing to say (laughs.) The last few years have been a very busy and a very interesting time for me, with Institute being the latest development. In summary, I guess you could say that I got married, I lost a band, and I gained a band. Obviously, there has been a great deal more to it than that, including a few small movie roles that I enjoyed, and a few solo soundtrack songs that I put together. But I know most of the people reading this want to focus on the musical side of things, as do I. I know that Bush developed quite a strong following over the years and all I can ask is that those fans check out Institute—I believe they'll like what they hear.

HP: Before we talk about Institute, let's discuss your high-profile marriage. Is it difficult living life in the fish-eye of a paparazzi lens? **GR:** It can be, but we do our best to avoid it. You know, once you are away from the kind of events where you know that the media is going to be, it isn't that difficult to find privacy. It's a little more difficult in Europe than it is in America, but unfortunately that's beginning to change, as well. But we've managed to maintain our privacy when we've wanted to. The marriage has been going very well—even better than I think either of us could have hoped for.

HP: Okay... back to music. Just to get a little perspective, when did Bush actually break up?

GR: It was more like a dissolution than a breakup. As fans may recall, on much of our last tour our guitarist, Nigel Pulsford, did not participate. He just didn't want to tour any more. From there things just continued to dissolve, and by late 2002 Bush had essentially come to an end. That's when I faced a difficult dilemma. I had been offered a new recording contract with Interscope—which happened to be where Bush had started out, and where my wife currently resides—and I had to decide whether to continue making music in the same vein as Bush, become a solo artist, or take the music in a new direction with a new band.

HP: Sounds like a tough choice.

GR: It was perhaps my biggest decision. I had to decide where I wanted to take my music. The first decision I made was that I realized that I definitely wanted my next album to be a band project rather than some solo effort. I wanted to collaborate with other musicians, and I chose the name Institute because to me that signifies a type of cultural collective. Then I met Page (Hamilton), who is someone I've long admired. From there, the music just went in a naturally heavy direction. Some of that was Page's influence, some was the band's decision, but I can guarantee that I didn't have to be carried kicking and screaming into the proceedings.

HP: We know Page Hamilton, who produced *Distort Yourself*,

from Helmet. How did you two meet?

GR: I've long believed Page to be a brilliant musician and songwriter. I came in contact with him through our guitarist, Chris Traynor, who aside from being a former member of Helmet, also toured with Bush on our last tour. When I asked Chris to become part of Institute, in the process of conversing about new ideas Page's name came up, and from there things took on a life of their own. I was looking to take the music in a heavier direction, but also to maintain some of the emotionalism and accessibility that my songs have always expressed. I think with Page's help we hit upon a perfect balance.

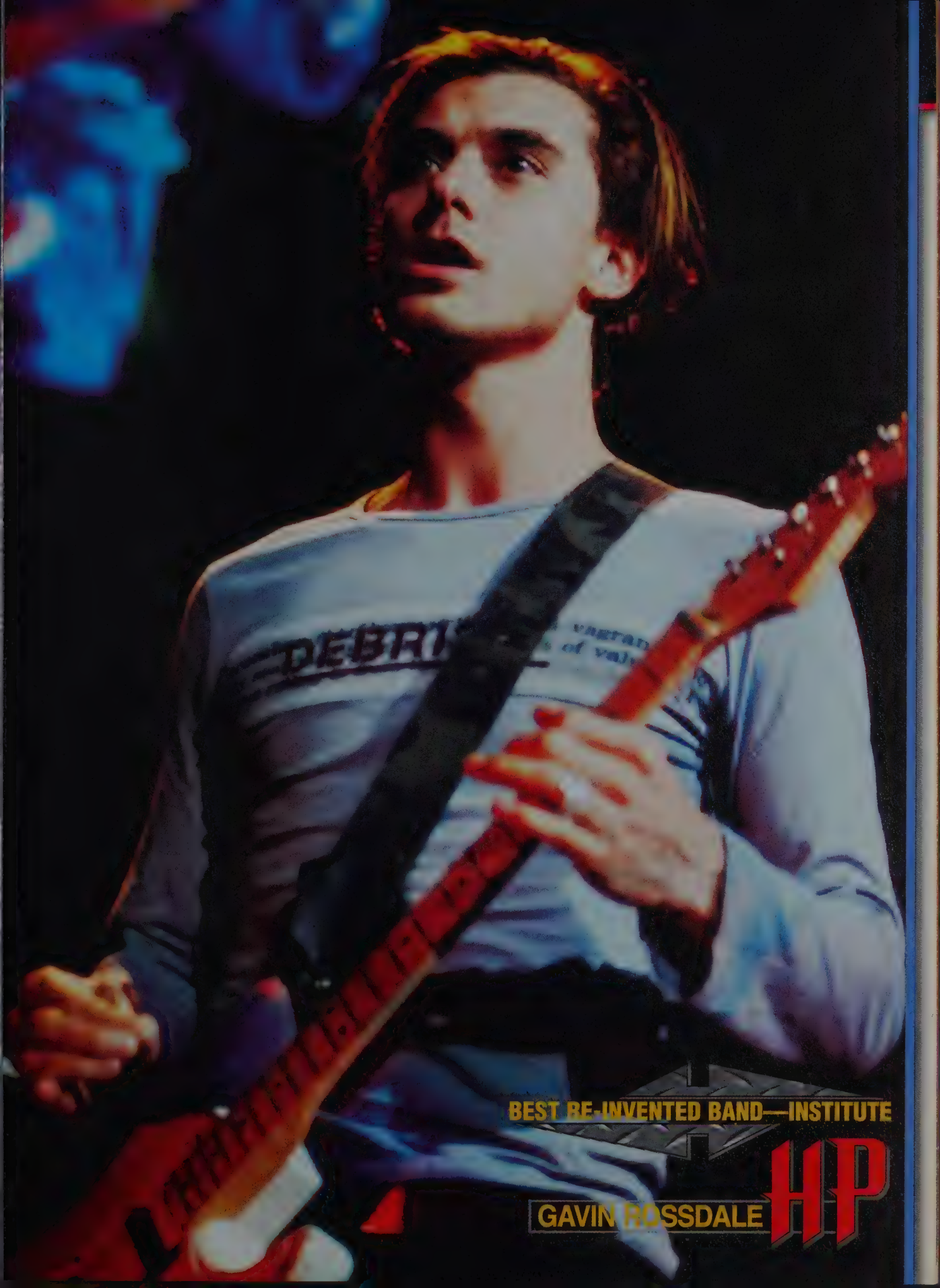
HP: Are you concerned that this "heavier" direction might serve to alienate some of the fans that have enjoyed your music over the last decade?

GR: I think it's great to have all that power featured in this band's music, yet manage to maintain a few vulnerable moments. Yes, we have some songs like *When Animals Attack* and *Come on Over* that just hit you with their intensity. But then there are others, such as *Save the Robots* and *Ambulances*, that are far less bombastic. It's a nice balance that I believe all sort of fans should enjoy. I've always believed that rock music should be for both boys and girls. I'm very interested in getting this hybrid correct. I love the drama of loud guitars, but I like to combine that with a sexy-enough groove so that it rises to the next level.

HP: Are you prepared to have the music of Institute compared to what you created in Bush?

GR: I still love the music we made in Bush, and I still very much like the members of that band. But to my ears that was different music for a different time. Obviously, there are some similarities between Bush and Institute because of the way I write and sing. But since everyone in this band was involved in the creative process there's definitely a different air surrounding the proceedings. All the guys in Bush were from London. All the guys in this band—except for me—and from New York. Thus there's a bit of a different vibe and energy going on. It's all very exciting for me. It's a new start and a new direction. Quite simply, it's the next step in my musical life.

"I know that Bush developed quite a strong following over the years and all I can ask is that those fans check out Institute—I believe they'll like what they hear."



BEST RE-INVENTED BAND—INSTITUTE

GAVIN ROSSDALE

HP

MASTODON

HEAVY UNDER FOOT

BY DAVE NOLAN

Fact: The mastodon—that hairy ancestor of our modern elephant—has been extinct for more than 10,000 years. Fact: The heavy metal band known as Mastodon is alive and well—having just unleashed their fourth album (and major label debut), **Blood Mountain**. For guitarist Bill Keliher, drummer Brann Dailor, bassist/vocalist Troy Saunders and guitarist/vocalist Brent Hinds, the release of their latest disc culminates a dizzying two-year trek that has seen this Atlanta-based Power Metal unit rise from cult status with their breakout disc, **Leviathan**, to become one of the leading lights of the 21st Century hard rock revolution. And while their new album takes them into some previously uncharted musical waters, the band believes that fans both old and new will instantly relate to the surprisingly diverse yet still heavy-handed style that Mastodon employ throughout **Blood Mountain**.

"When we had a little free time after the end of our last tour, we all started listening to a lot of great music," Dailor said. "A great deal of it ended up being classic rock—with a lot of progressive rock thrown in for good measure. What then happened is that everything we had been listening to began to color our own musical efforts. So when we started writing for this album we found ourselves being a little more ambitious. **Leviathan** was certainly ambitious—but there's no question that this one takes it to the next level."

Throughout **Blood Mountain** Mastodon has managed to make modern-day "progressive rock" while never losing sight of their pedal-to-the-metal musical roots. Recording with long-time producer Matt Bayles, the band has created what might loosely be termed a "concept" album—one in which each song flows naturally into the next. But despite the lofty artistic ambitions displayed throughout their latest collection, the members of Mastodon insist that there's just as much "thrash metal" intensity housed within their new music as cerebral musical musings.

"At heart I think we'll always be a thrash metal band," Dailor said. "When you tour with some of the heaviest bands in the world, as we did last year, it's hard to get away from your metal roots. But at the same time, we write a lot of our songs on acoustic guitars, which allows us to stretch out and try different things. I think you hear a lot of that on this album."

With the success of **Blood Mountain**, there can be little question that Mastodon are now the "it" band of the rock and roll moment. Major bands want them to serve as "special guests" on their tours, media outlets vie to place them in their publications, and even the oft-misguided forces at rock radio seem to be warming to this metallic monster's full-throttle style. In all honesty, this Georgia-based unit probably never imagined that their wall-shaking blend of grind-core metal ingredients would cause such a stir both in the hard rock "underground" and the metal mainstream. But with their new effort ranking among the year's most oft-discussed and oft-praised heavy metal collections, it would clearly appear as if Mastodon are about to rumble their way to the very apex of the hard rock pecking order.

"It is a little hard for us to believe that we're getting so much attention with this album," Saunders said. "The problem for us right now is to not let any of the nice things people are saying have an impact on us. We've all seen a lot of bands that go from being cool guys to pains in the ass as soon as they start to feel good about themselves. We do feel good about ourselves, but we're not gonna let it give us any massive egos."

While they're currently the Golden Boys of the metal world, success hasn't come particularly fast or particularly easily for the members of Mastodon. For Dailor and Keliher, their past associations included stints with such bands as Today Is the Day and Lethargy, both of which enjoyed extensive media and fan support while never breaking through to the Big Time. In 2000, those two decided to leave their on-the-brink units to team with Saunders and Hinds—in the process, forming Mastodon. For a year the band rumbled through the Southern rock circuit, leaving a trail of metallic destruction in their wake. By 2001, their first release, **Lifesblood**, marked Mastodon's ascension up the underground metal ladder, and in 2002 their follow-up, **Remission**, proved that this unit was going to be long-term players on the hard rock scene. But it wasn't until the multi-dimensional **Leviathan** hit the streets in 2004 that the vast majority of the metal community began to take note of Mastodon. Things haven't been the same since for this ambitious unit. Now with the instant acclaim heaped upon **Blood Mountain**, this fearsome foursome's transformation into metal stars of the highest order seems almost complete.

"There have been some changes over the years," Saunders said. I would say one of the biggest changes has been with the vocals. In the past, there was a lot of screaming, while on both **Leviathan** and this album there's a lot more actual singing. We needed to make the vocals work like that because the lyrics to these songs are so strong. We wanted them to be fully understood and appreciated."

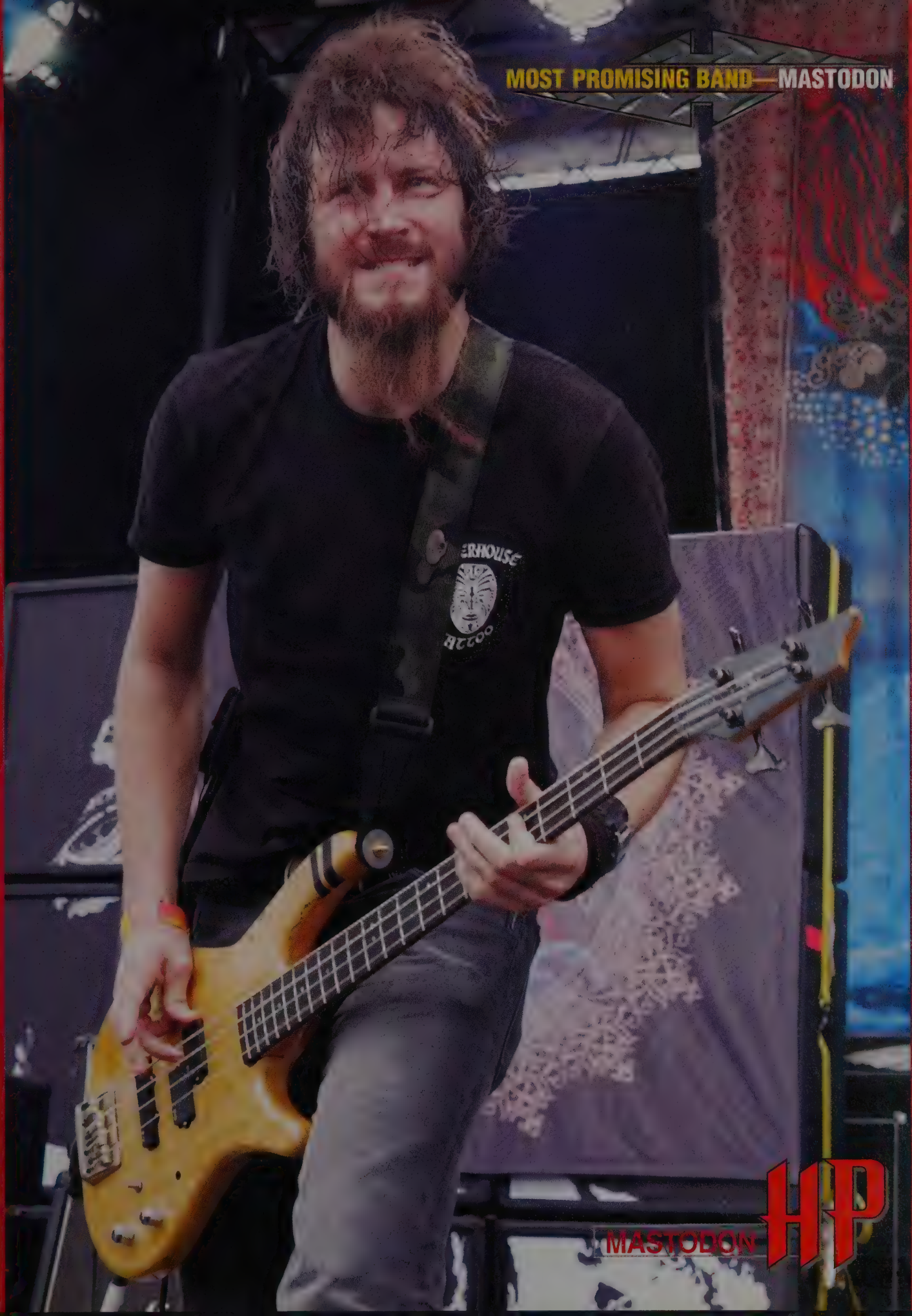
With commercial and critical response to their music creating that much-desired "buzz" around Mastodon, it hasn't taken the "big boys" of the metal world long to notice these power-packed upstarts. While the group has done the traditional tours with fellow on-the-rise acts like Clutch and Fear Factory, they've also been given the nod by Metal Gods like Slayer, with whom Mastodon recently shared a stage for an entire road trek. Touring with Slayer not only gave these fun-loving rockers a certain, undeniable "nod" of approval from the metal overlords, it

"We wanted to be very ambitious with this album."

also helped the Mastodon men introduce themselves to an ever-wider audience.

"Touring with Slayer was incredible," Saunders said. "Maybe the only greater thrill for me would be the chance to go on the road with Metallica. I don't know if that will ever happen, but certainly the Slayer tour is one of the highlights of our lives. When you think about the number of bands who wanted the Slayer tour, and that they chose us, that is just mind-blowing! It was the chance to let a lot of people who may have never heard of us or our music get a chance to sample what we're capable of doing."

MOST PROMISING BAND — MASTODON



MASTODON

HP

Once again Korn have done things their way... and emerged victorious! For over a dozen years this Bakersfield, CA-spawned heavy rock unit has broken all the rules and bent all the restrictions that so often serve to define the rock and roll world. Once again, on their latest album, **See You On The Other Side**, vocalist Jonathan Davis, bassist Reginald "Fieldy" Arvizu, guitarist James "Munky" Shaffer and drummer David Silveria chose to give the proverbial finger to heavy metal convention by working with a variety of "pop" producers to create one of the most expansive and *heavy* albums of their extraordinary career. Working as a four piece for the first time (guitarist Brian "Head" Welch left the group for "religious" reasons early in 2005), Korn managed to unify their thoughts and attitudes into a single overwhelming masterwork—a disc that stands as the crowning achievement of a career that already towers among the most important and influential in recent hard rock history. As the band began their 2006 world tour, we sat down with the ever-informative Davis in order to gain further insight into the "other side" of Korn.

KORN

BY ROB ANDREWS

HP: Do you ever stop to think about the legacy that Korn has created?

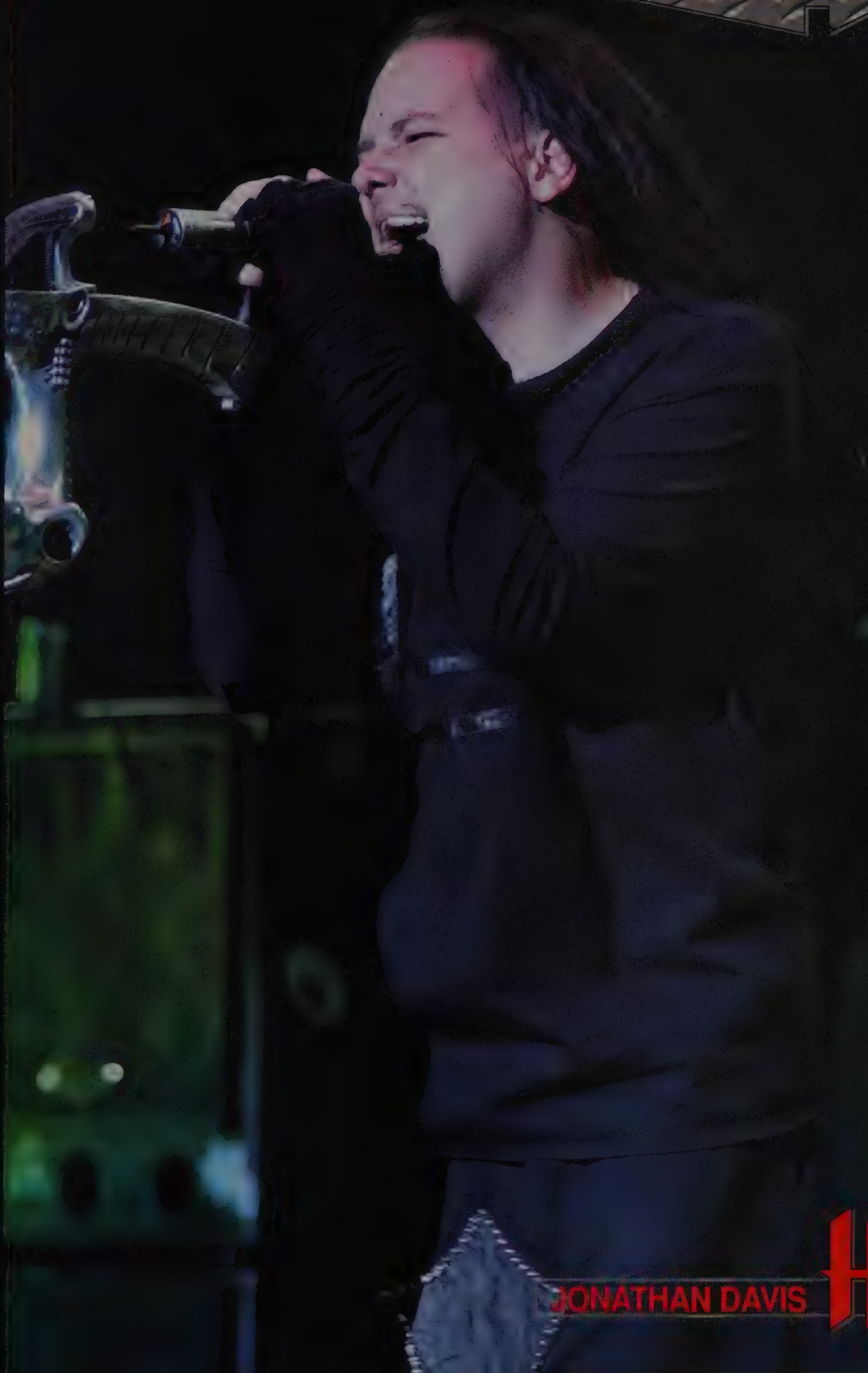
JD: I think of it more in terms of everything happening for a reason. I think back 12 years ago to when Munky and Head first walked into a bar in Bakersfield and saw me singing. Since then everything has happened for some sort of reason—whether it's the success we've had, some of the personal difficulties, Head leaving, or even the new record deal that was signed. I want to believe that it's all part of this greater plan.

HP: Now that you're on the road, do you miss Head more than when you were recording?

BETTER THAN EVER

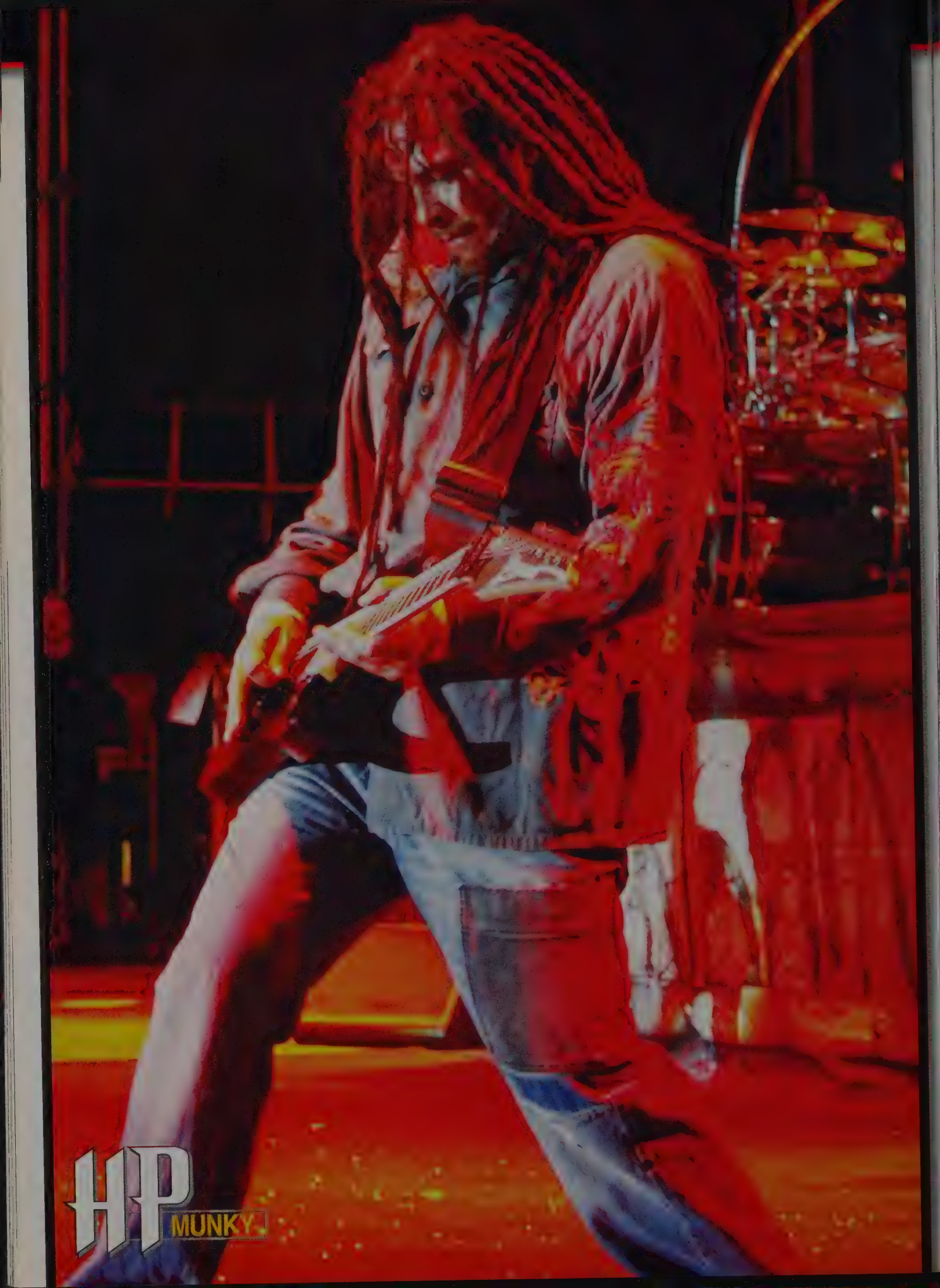


BAND OF THE YEAR—KORN



JONATHAN DAVIS

HP

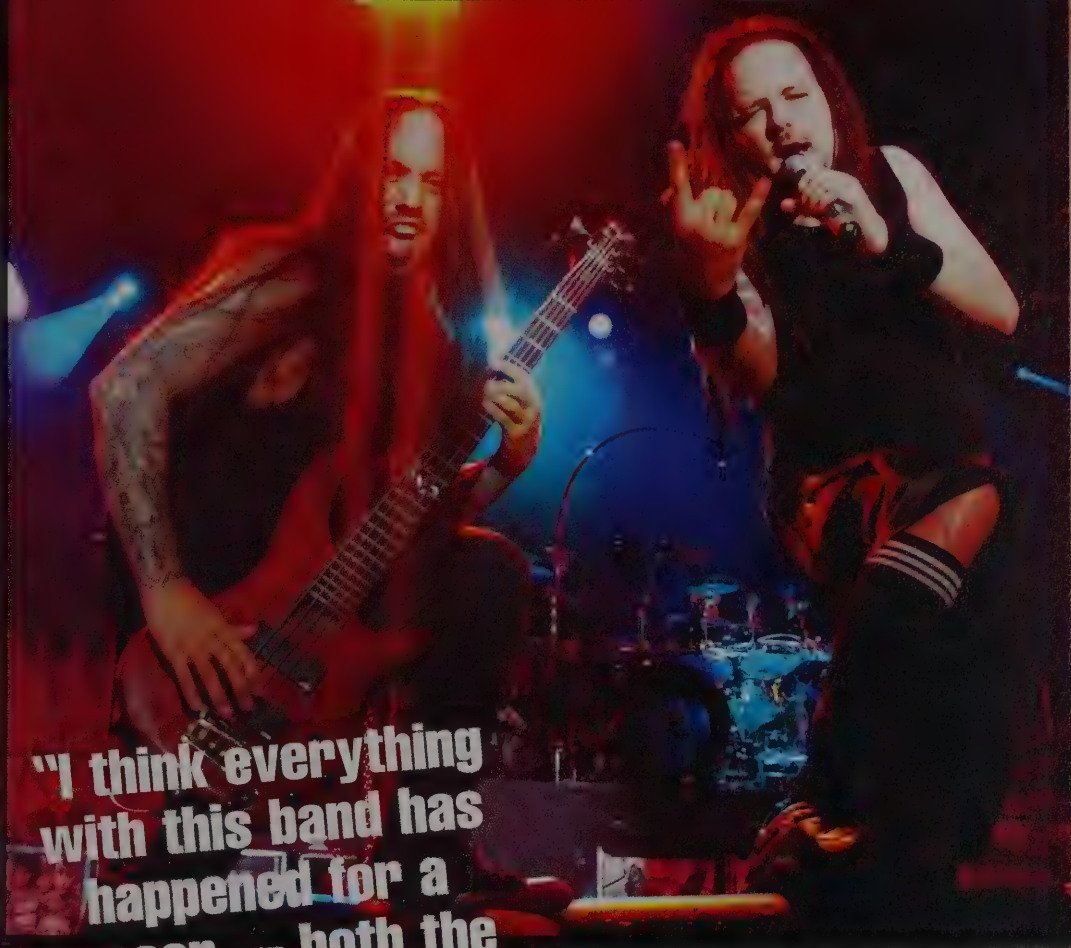


HP
MUNKY

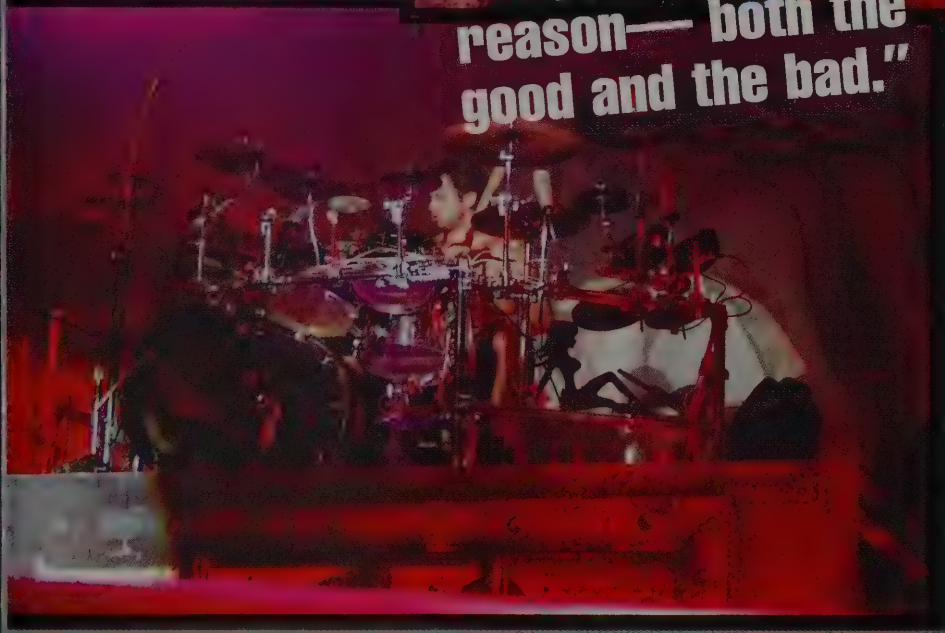
JD: I don't know if I'd say we miss him more... but we miss him. He was our brother, someone we spent so much time with for a lot of years. Every time when we're playing on stage I still look over kind of expecting to see him there. And after the show's over, in the dressing room, I miss his laugh... his sense of humor. He was the comedian of the band. It was an unfortunate thing that happened, but he had to go off and do his thing. We're happy for him, but it was something that had to happen for everyone involved.

HP: How much extra pressure did his absence place on each of you when you were making this album?

JD: It placed an incredible amount of pressure on us—especially on Munky. Before, he always had a partner to share some of the guitar responsibility and someone to just bounce ideas and riffs off of. Now that guy wasn't there. At first it was kind of intimidating for him. We had to encourage him at times to let him know that we had total confidence in him. But by doing that, it drew us all closer together. It unified Korn like never before, and it inspired us. It made us incredibly hungry to prove



"I think everything with this band has happened for a reason—both the good and the bad."



to everyone—including ourselves—that we could do this as a four piece.

HP: Is there any song in the live set that you've had to replace because Head isn't involved any more?

JD: No there isn't. Absolutely not. We have a friend, Rob Patterson, on the road with us to fill some of those holes on guitar. He's definitely not a new member of the band, but he's helping us out by doing a lot of the rhythm stuff which allows us to play any song we want—whether it's old or new. There are absolutely no limitations on us. The stage set we're using on this tour is mind-blowing, and the sound is incredible, as well. To my ears, Korn has never sounded better!

HP: You somewhat jokingly mention in the *Twisted Transistor* video that "rock is dead." Do you really feel that way?

JD: Well, I sure hope it isn't dead. (Laughs) But sometimes when you put on any of the video channels you might think it is. You don't see much rock any more. I was joking to our manager one day that I didn't know how we were gonna get any of our videos on the air because all you see being played are hip-hop videos. I just said—totally in fun—that maybe we needed to get hip-hop guys to play us in order to get the next video some air time. Things just developed from there. It just clicked in my head. We contacted our director—who also happened to have directed a lot of

hip-hop videos—and we told him the basic idea, but we also said that we also wanted to add a lot of over-the-top elements to it.. like it was *Spinal Tap*.

HP: How true-to-life are some of the things we see in the *Twisted Transistor* video?

JD: Believe it or not, almost everything you see in that video has happened to us at one time or another. But we wanted to take some of the basic ideas and then just blow them way out of proportion for the comedic value. Our goal from the very start was to do something totally different—which was the whole idea for the entire album. In a lot of ways, Korn is a new band right now, and this album, and the first video, kind of say that very clearly.

HP: Earlier you mentioned your new record deal, one that makes you virtual "partners" with your label. How has that gone so far?

JD: It's good for us because we got tired of working for a label. That got really boring and predictable. It had reached the point where we felt like we were working really hard to make the label a lot of money while we really weren't making anything. You lose some of your incentive that way. Now, with the deal being like a 70-30 split in our favor, there's a *lot* of incentive. But now the label also shares in some of our tour revenues, and our merchandise, and our video games, which brings them closer into our entire business arrangement—which is really cool.

HP: Do you ever wonder how long the Korn musical magic will last?

JD: It's not something I dwell on. But I see it lasting for as long as we can make it last, or as long as we *want* to make it last. As long as there are Korn fans out there who want to buy our albums and come to our shows, we'll be doing this. Why would we ever stop?

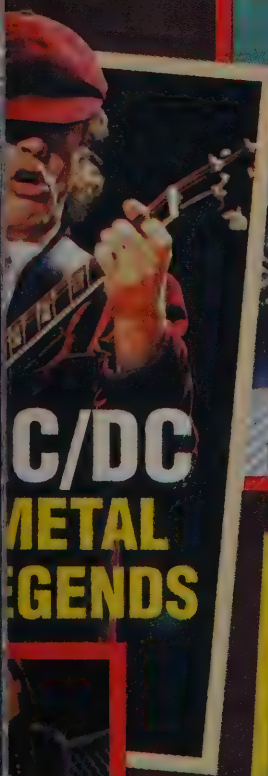




SLIPKNOT
MOST
OUTRAGEOUS
BAND



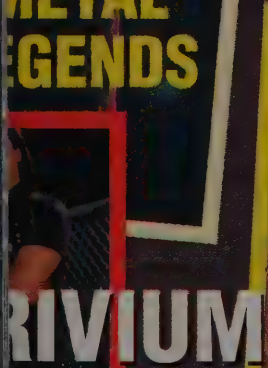
FAVORITE
PERSONALITY
MANSON



C/DC
METAL
LEGENDS



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KORN



MUDVAYNE

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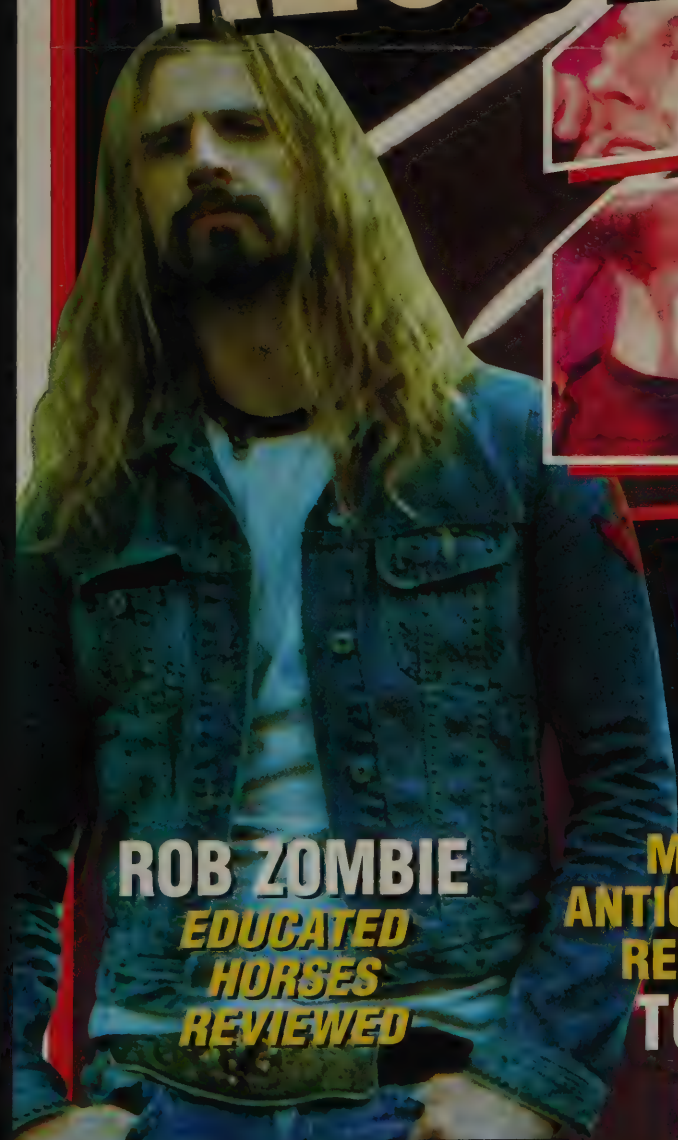
HIT PARADER

READERS' SURVEY RESULTS

WHO DID YOU CHOOSE AS BAND OF THE YEAR?



SLIPKNOT
MOST OUTRAGEOUS BAND



ROB ZOMBIE
EDUCATED HORSES REVIEWED



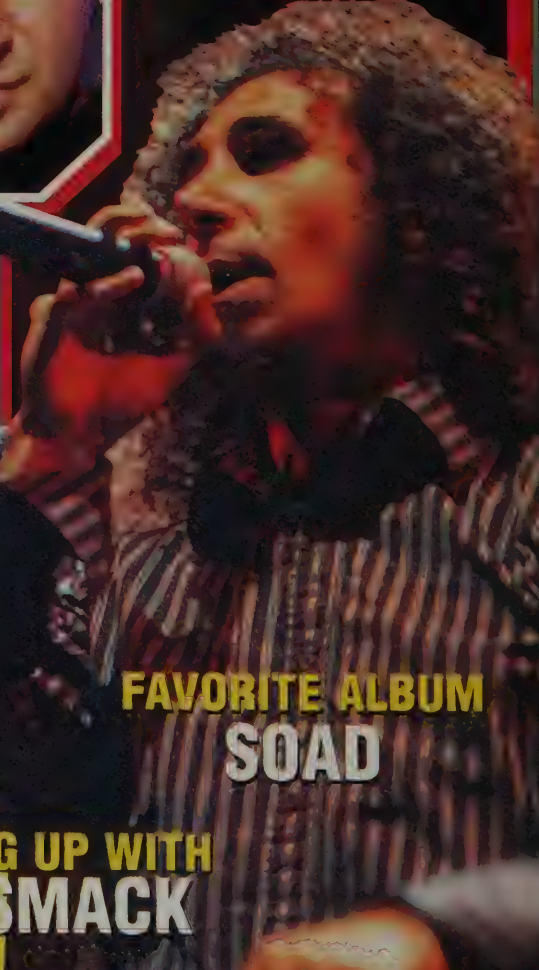
MOST ANTICIPATED RETURN
TOOL



AC/DC
METAL LEGENDS



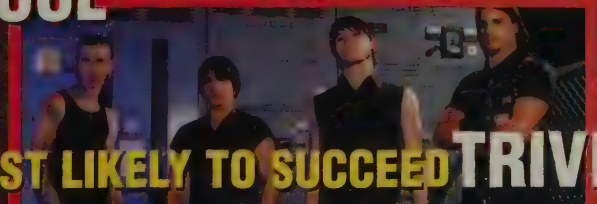
FAVORITE PERSONALITY
MANSON



FAVORITE ALBUM
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MAY 2006



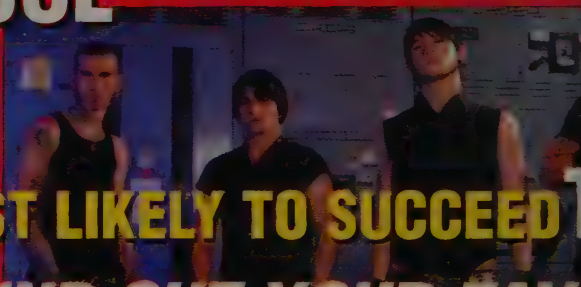
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Koryn

JONATHAN DAVIS

HP

TRIVIUM

SOUND OF THE FUTURE

BY ROB ANDREWS

You just can't buy a good rock and roll "buzz." Oh yeah, maybe you can purchase THAT kind of a buzz; but quite obviously, that's not what we're talking about here. The kind of buzz we're referring to is the sound made by the combined forces of the media, record label executives and various industry movers-and-shakers as they simultaneously extol the virtues of a particularly promising young band. It doesn't happen often... especially in these lean and mean hard rock times. But in the case of Trivium, the buzz surrounding this Florida-based metal unit is loud enough to make you search out a pair of solid ear plugs.

"It's really nice when people are talking about you," said vocalist/guitarist Matt Heafy. "And it's even better when they're saying something nice! At first, you're almost scared to listen to what people are saying, or read what they may be writing, because it might not be what you want to hear or see. But we've been very lucky in that a lot of people

seem to relate to what we do—and they seem to really enjoy it."

Enjoy it, indeed. With the success of their latest disc, **Ascendancy**, Trivium have cemented their rep as one of the hottest young metal bands in the world. And when we say "young," we mean it.

"It's really nice when people are talking about you."

The members of this trend-bending heavy metal unit now range in age from 18 to 21, and during their brief time on Planet Earth it seems as if just about every hard rock style from thrash to grunge to progressive has been heard and absorbed by this ambitious quartet. But it's not as if Trivium are merely regurgitating various bits of rock history on **Ascendancy**. Rather, from the technical precision that marks tracks such as *Like Light to the Flies*, to the full-brunt brutality that distinguishes *Pull Harder on the Strings of Your Martyr*, this is a disc and a band with an approach that is distinctly their own.

"The title of the album refers to the overcoming of life's obstacles—to rise above everything and overcome the corruption of

Heafy. "I've tried to really open up and show what I'm thinking inside, revealing the problems that are particularly troubling. **Ascendancy** deals with many realizations based around that theme."

This process of self-realization hasn't exactly come overnight for the members of Trivium. Back in the early '90s, when Heafy, guitarist Corey Beaulieu, drummer Travis Smith and bassist Paolo Gregoletto were growing up in and around their home town of Orlando, it didn't take them long to discover the wonders of rock and roll. Indeed, from the time this crew was old enough to walk and talk, the pulsating rhythms, instrumental precision and lyrical power of the hard rock form seemed to consume them. Over the ensuing years, as they wandered in and out of various local bands seeking to find their own post-adolescent rock and roll voices, these four young rockers came to one singular realization—that nothing was more important to them than making music.

"We always had problems with parents who wanted us to focus more on school than on our music," Heafy said. "So we always had to compromise some of our focus in order to make sure that we kept everyone else happy. But now that we're a little older, we've been able to put all our focus into the band, and that's made a huge difference for us."

It's obvious from his words—as well as his surprisingly cerebral approach to both his music and lyrics—that young Mr. Heafy isn't your "normal" teen-aged rocker. In fact, in many ways he stands as a prime representative of metal's New Breed... thoughtful, introspective and powerful musicians who aren't afraid of exposing their inner-most turmoil through song. It's been that way for Heafy since he was 14 and formed the first version of Trivium (which translates from Latin to mean "the intersection between the three schools of learning: grammar, rhetoric and logic") with school bud Smith during the summer of 2000. After suffering through the traditional lineup changes, the band's roster finally began to solidify in 2002, and a year later the group recorded their first album, **Ember to Inferno**, for a label based in Germany. The Continental success of that disc led to Trivium being asked to join that year's *Road Rage* tour with the likes of Machine Head and Chimaria—which up until the release of **Ascendancy** stood as this unit's career highlight.

"That tour was an amazing experience for us," Heafy said. "It was like every night was a party—and I don't mean that in the sense of getting drunk. It was more about being able to hang out with great musicians and learn a lot from them. That was the most important thing for me because I hadn't been able to hang around with that many real musicians before that. And the chance to feed off of the energy the crowd brought every night was incredible. It really pumped us up when it came time to begin work on this album."

Recorded in Europe during the summer of 2004, though it didn't hit American record store shelves until the middle of 2005, **Ascendancy** is clearly Trivium's call-to-arms. Drawing on the thrash energy of such metal pioneers as Slayer and Metallica and then adding their own highly distinctive musical and lyrical perspectives to the heavy brew, this is the disc that is destined to make this fearsome four-some big-time players on the 21st Century metal stage. And despite the fact that they're barely old enough to have any first-hand knowledge of many of hard rock's pioneering units, Trivium seem intent on keeping the most noble of heavy metal traditions alive and well.

"The first album we did was more raw and aggressive," Heafy said. "This one is still very heavy, but at the same time it shows some of our more progressive influences. There are twin-guitar harmonic going on, and the whole level of song writing is far more sophisticated than it was before. We're still young—we're continuing to grow. And rather than fighting those changes, we're doing our best to embrace them. We set out to make an album that showcased the multi-dimensional aspects of this band, and we have. We've tried to draw equally from a wide variety of influences, then make sure that there's plenty of our own perspectives thrown into the mix."

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED—TRIVIUM



TRIVIUM **HP**

"This has been a wild, amazing ride that's been filled with more 'ups' than 'downs.'"

It's been more than a year since Mudvayne's latest album, *Lost and Found*, emerged to rock the music world to its very core. During that time vocalist Chad Gray, guitarist Greg Tribbett, bassist Ryan Martinie and drummer Matt McDonough have seen that disc sell nearly a million copies while garnering a prestigious Grammy nomination for the song *Determined*. If that wasn't enough to satisfy this heavy metal unit's creative soul, consider this: another song from their new collection, *Happy?*, was named "Active Rock Song of the Year" by *Billboard* magazine, while MTV's *Headbanger's Ball* named that said-same tune "Video of the Year." When you throw in the band's numerous tour accolades for good measure, you begin to realize why this Peoria-based unit is rather sad to see this highly successful segment of their career draw to a conclusion.

"It's hard to describe what the last year has been like for us," Gray said. "It's been a wild, amazing ride that's thankfully been filled with a lot more 'ups' than 'downs'. *Lost and Found* became our third straight gold album, and we toured with the likes of Iron Maiden and Black Sabbath. Then when you add in all the award nominations, things get even better. We're very honored and very proud of it all; it's all due to the incredible support that our fans have given us. We may be taking a little break to recharge our batteries, but we can promise them all that they'll hear and see plenty of us in 2006... we're just getting warmed up!"

True to Gray's words, 2006 is already shaping up to be a busy year for Mudvayne. The band recently completed their *Masters of Horror* headlining tour. In addition, they've released a new single, *Fall Into Sleep*, and have just returned from Australia, where they headlined the legendary *Big Day Out Festival*. Not bad for a band that many thought had passed their commercial peak when they decided to drop their trademark facial makeup back in 2004. But for the 'Vayne, such skepticism comes as part of their musical territory, and this highly cerebral, ever-unpredictable quartet have responded to the challenge that such an attitude presents with renewed passion and even more intense musical mayhem.

"Change has never intimidated us," Gray said. "In fact, we embrace it in any way we can. Obviously, over the years we've been willing to alter our appearance and even some of our musical attitudes. Change is good."

Indeed, few bands understand the concept of rock and roll "change" better than Mudvayne. In fact, change—to the extent of it serving as nothing less than a morphing guise of musical existence—has become a way-of-life for this theatrically-inspired metal unit. For Mudvayne, the success of their latest album and tour is filled them with a new sense of responsibility, a new sense of musical awareness, and a new sense of self. After tasting the sweetness of commercial success as well as the occasional bitterness of critical castigation throughout their six year career, this in many ways has been a time of rebirth for Mudvayne.

"We will do whatever we feel works best in communicating our musical message," Gray said. "If that means wearing outrageous makeup on stage—or not wearing any at all—isn't partic-

ularly important. The focus has to be on the music, not on what we may be wearing or doing. That was a very conscious decision we made a few years ago, and its one that came to full fruition with this album and tour."

No one who has closely followed the heavy metal scene over the last few years can deny that Mudvayne have had a significant impact on the philosophy, attitude and appearance of the contemporary music world. This highly unusual, highly theatrical and highly intelligent quartet has managed to overcome initial media skepticism and apparent fan reluctance to win over countless thousands to the bold, brash and eminently bizarre style they bring forth both on stage and on such discs as their 2001 debut, *L.D. 50* and 2003's *the End of All Things to Come*. For this fearsome foursome, the last six years have been a dizzying trek through the hard rock stratosphere—a fitting voyage for four super troupers whose look, style and attitude has been influenced by everything from the intricacies of quantum physics to the philosophies presented in the classic film, *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

"That movie had a big impact on all of us," Gray said. "That was particularly evident on our first album. Kubrick's work in general has influenced us, but *2001* in particular—some of the metaphors in that movie really impacted us. We like to think some of our music reflects and embodies ideas of evolution of consciousness, transformation, and the risks involved in experimenting with things that can change a person's point of view."

That's certainly an interesting and insightful analysis—especially when it's offered by a band that had to overcome the initial stigma of being viewed as merely the latest "shock rock" sensation by more than a few narrow-minded souls. Please understand, however, that the members of this erudite quartet haven't exactly wilted away under the weight of public scrutiny. In fact, each of Mudvayne's members seem to revel in the chaos that has been generated by their highly eclectic look, sound and approach. And while they've now chosen to take a significant step back in terms of the on-stage insanity they present, their sound is more volatile, unpredictable and mentally stimulating than ever!

No matter that they may appear somewhat more subdued these days, the fact of the matter is that being somewhat theatrical in their presentation will always come naturally to the members of Mudvayne. Having absorbed so much of what now passes for modern culture through their viewing of movies and television, in many ways Mudvayne are the logical by-product of the various artistic components that comprise early 21st Century society. Some of it is amusing. Some of it is entertaining. Some of it is thought-provoking. And some of it is downright shocking. And as they continue along their ground-breaking path, these rockers seem to have their fingers squarely on the pulse of what is making the contemporary metal scene tick.

"You always want to explore with music," Gray said. "From mathematical precision to mainstream culture, it's all part of who and what we are as a band. It's there because it adds something to what we were trying to do."

MUDVAYNE

ENJOYING THE RIDE

BY P.J. MERKLE

FAVORITE LIVE BAND—MUDVAYNE



MUDVAYNE

HP

Angus Young couldn't stop smiling. AC/DC's pint-sized guitar demon was seated in a huge chair in his plush hotel suite looking almost waifish. He was his typical ball of nervous energy, continually brushing his longish brown hair from in front of his eyes, tugging on his black T-shirt, and absent-mindedly swinging his sneakered feet back and forth beneath the richly upholstered chair upon which he was ensconced. No, Angus may not have been dressed in his trademark schoolboy suit, and his customary Gibson SG was nowhere in sight, but there was no mistaking this now 50-year-old rock and roll legend as he waded through a long day's worth of press briefings. Angus was in the Big Apple to discuss AC/DC's long-awaited new disc, and even a casual mention of the album had the usually reserved Mr. Young grinning from ear-to-ear.

"When you start a band, you never imagine that so many years later you could still get so excited about something you've done," he said. "At first all you concern yourself with is just making good music, and maybe getting a little recognition. If things grow beyond that, you're really very lucky. For AC/DC it's really been an amazing ride from start to present. There have been good times and there have been sad times, but to be able to make an album this strong at this point in our career is really quite special for me. But the more I think about it, the one thing I realize is that the desire to create good rock and roll music is the one thing that's stayed constant throughout all the years."

It seems almost trite to say that few bands have played a more important role than this legendary Thunder From Down Under in shaping the style, sound and attitude of the hard rock world. From their earliest days in the mid-'70s when the late Bon Scott served as the band's dual focal point with the ever-present Angus, right up through their latest Brian Johnson-fronted creations, AC/DC has remained the unquestioned kings of riff-rock—the band that has done more with a mere three chords than anyone since the invention of the electric guitar.

With the release of their new album—their first in nearly five years, and their initial offering under a multi-disc deal with Sony Music—the next step in AC/DC's rock and roll legacy has begun to come into better focus. At a time of change within the rock world, a period when the music industry itself seems unsure what to do with the metal

form, AC/DC have once again ridden in to help save the day. Long derided by critics, and loved by fans, for their simplistic approach and cartoon-like stage antics, few can now deny that this unit has further solidified their place in the hard rock pantheon. Sure, their new release features the expected dose of mega-octane area rock anthems, but perhaps even more importantly it signals that basic, powerful hard rock music is still alive and well in 2006... even if it is fighting to survive amid the growing horde of raucous rap raconteurs and soulless pop practitioners.

"I'm often asked why it takes us so long to finish our albums," Angus said. "The simplest answer I can come up with is that writing and recording songs in the studio is work for us. Playing live is where the fun is. And I know we'll get to that soon enough. We can't wait to start bringing some of these new songs into the set. For us, that's the exciting part—to be able to incorporate new things and old things into a single show that captures the highlights of our entire career."

Indeed, AC/DC's career has been one filled with sensational highs, such as watching their historic 1981 disc **Back in Black** sell more than ten million copies, and catastrophic lows—as

AC/DC

THREE CHORDS & OUT!

BY WINSON CUMMINGS

occurred when the hard-living Scott was found dead in his car in 1979. Each and every episode, however, has served to add additional luster to the band's legend. Quite simply, AC/DC long-ago established themselves as the band that couldn't be stopped, the rock and roll power house whose express train could never be derailed. They survived the death of Scott, the personal problems of rhythm guitarist Malcolm Young and the decade-long defection of drummer Phil Rudd. But today, with Malcolm and Rudd both long back in the fold, and Angus rocking harder than ever, the future looks just as bright as their past for AC/DC.

"One of the reasons we've always shied away from doing any of those traditional 'greatest hits' things is that to our way of thinking it's admitting that perhaps your best days are behind you," the guitar great said. "I think everyone knows that certainly isn't true with AC/DC. We've been together for 25 years, so in a way each album we do is a celebration of that fact. But I always laugh when I hear anyone say that this is supposedly AC/DC's last album, or that the next one is going to be our final tour. How would they know? Anyway, if I were to stop playing rock and roll what would I do with myself?"

Heaven forbid the very notion of Angus *ever* giving up his desire to lay the meanest guitar riffs this side of Hades. If ever there was a band that was born to rock until they dropped it's undoubtedly AC/DC. With the appearance of a new album, both the band's long-time fans and a host of newly won converts have discovered the time-honored sounds of this truly unique, truly great band. If and when a time capsule for the Rock And Roll Era is finally sealed and a single group is chosen to represent that period in music history, here's a least one vote for AC/DC to be that very band. After nearly three decades atop the rock and roll mountain, AC/DC's credo remains loyal to the time-tested words of Bon Scott himself... "Let there be rock!"

"It's not easy for me to sit here and discuss our music in a very clinical fashion," Angus said. "Sometimes people want to analyze a song, or even a particular guitar solo, and I get very embarrassed. It's not that I'm not proud of them, it's just that I don't really know what to say. Rock and roll to me has always been something very visceral—something that just comes from the heart and the soul as much as it does from the head. So being able to just pick it apart to discuss it is a very difficult thing to do. My advice has always been—and always will be—to sit back and enjoy it. Don't try to make a big deal about it. Hey, it's just AC/DC."

"It's hard to believe that I'm still so excited about this band."

FAVORITE METAL LEGENDS—AC/DC



ANGUS YOUNG

HP

If you didn't know better (and let's face it, you probably didn't), you might be under the misguided impression that notorious shock-rocker Marilyn Manson has been laying low over the last few months. After all, it's been years since his last album, **The Golden Age of Grotesque**, hit the charts, and his largely "underground" film efforts have so-far failed to make anything near the kind of cross-cultural impact that his rock and roll career enjoyed throughout Manson's late '90s run as Public Enemy #1. But if you think Manson hasn't been keeping his ever-active mind in work mode, then you'd better think again. The fact is that not only has Manson slowly-but-surely been getting his musical career back in prime working order, he's been filling his idle time with everything from reading new screen plays to developing his own fragrance (may we suggest *Eau du Wormboy?*) that should hit store shelves sometime in 2006.

"It's going to be different," Mason said about the fragrance. "But it will hopefully find an outlet in the market place. This isn't being done as some kind of a joke. I think it will turn out to be very successful."

Why *shouldn't* a Marilyn Manson fragrance be successful? Just about everything else that the former Brian Warner has attempted over the last decade has eventually proven to be a hit... even when it's taken mainstream society a little extra time to catch up to virtually every one of MM's ahead-of-its-era concepts. That's why we're betting that not only will a Manson line of cosmetics take off (after all, those Goth kids are *heavy* consumers), but that his film career will also eventually prove to be a major success. But, of course, with more and more of his time being taken up with non-music-related endeavors, those who clamor for the next dose of high-octane Manson music, and those who crave a heaping helping of his unbridled on-stage insanity realize that their wait may invariably become a lengthy one.

"My interests have always been the same, but over the years my priorities may have shifted a bit," he said. "But music will always be very important to me. I always think of myself first-and-foremost as an artist, and after that, I like to think of myself as a rock star. I don't say that in an egotistical way—more in that I've been willing to go up on stage and do things the way a rock star should. Who else is doing that at this point? To me rock stars have always been iconic figures, and that's what I've tried to be. They're the people who are bigger than life, not the guys who step off stage, strip off their clothes and makeup and hop into the family station wagon with the wife and kids."

A cultural icon, for sure. But the question of whether or not Marilyn Manson is a Rock God for the ages still remains to be seen. His album product over the years has often proven spotty,



with the unquestioned high point being the classic **Antichrist Superstar**. Indeed, his recent collections have perhaps been a tad too "thoughtful" for those fans who prefer the music down-'n-dirty and their stars perpetually living on the precipice of disaster. There seems to be no question that while he may still occasionally enjoy walking to the brink and peering over, for the most part life on the edge is something that Manson has left in his glorious past.

"I like to think I'm very much a realist when it comes to questions concerning how I may

"Over the years my priorities may have shifted a bit."

be viewed in the context of rock history," he said. "I know that I'm not a timeless commodity. The world will continue to spin with or without Marilyn Manson. But on the other hand, I do like to think that maybe I've touched some lives and altered some opinions. Maybe I've inspired someone to be a little different and try something they may never have thought of trying before. If I've done that, then I'm satisfied. People need to let their creativity run free."

"Being shocking merely for shock value has never been that interesting to me. What's the fun in that? The trick is to draw attention in a provocative manner that utilizes your art to the fullest extent. If you can be imaginative in the manner in which you provoke then you're achieving something. You're getting people to think, to imagine and to react. Those are the important things. What I do on albums and on stage is a true form of personal expression... if that shocks some people then they're not really understanding what I'm doing."

Whether the world will ever truly understand Manson's "art" is an on-going subject of debate. His recent movie appearances, which have included the role of the Queen of Hearts in the recent flick *Living in Neon Dreams*, have once again raised both eyebrows and the temperatures of conservative action groups. The recent gallery displays of his paintings have drawn the expected wide swath of critical response—ranging from outright praise, to thinly veiled disgust. But, if truth be known, Manson wouldn't have it any other way. When it comes to his artistic endeavors—be they paint, film or music—he truly lives by the time-honored credo, "love me... hate me... just don't ignore me."

"Much of the great art has always been unconventional," he said. "I'm not going to sit here and start naming great artists from the past... or present... because it might sound like I'm comparing myself to them. That's not my intention. But I do compare myself in the fact that I'm willing to take chances in order to express myself. The basic premise of much of my recent music has been that art doesn't have to always please the eye or ear. It can be grotesque at times, but that doesn't detract from its true value as a powerful means of expression."

"And I've always believed rock and roll can contain true art. To a great extent it depends on who's performing it. If it touches people in an emotional sense, then it is art. If it draws a reaction from them—whether it's positive or negative—then perhaps it is art. I understand that rock and roll is primarily an entertainment form. But its nature is a somewhat disposable medium. Art should never be quite that disposable. It needs to assume a more timeless quality. In today's culture, we unfortunately worship entertainment and entertainers. Unfortunately, we do not worship art or artists the same way."

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO



FAVORITE PERSONALITY—MANSON

MANSON

HP

THE EDGE

HARD ROCK'S NEW STARS

BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

THE SWORD

The Sword are a bunch of old souls trapped in young turks' bodies. The individual members that make up The Sword are youngins – guitarist Kyle Shutt is just 22- but their wise-beyond-their-years vibe is visible by a simple glance at the CDs they listen to when in their tour van. Steely Dan and The Doobie Brothers are staples in The Sword's stereo. Shutt emphatically states that those records are "some of the best albums ever recorded." True, but they came out before members of the Sword were even born! "I've been playing since I was 15. I discovered that stuff from friends and great records stores in Austin," the guitarist admits.

In addition to being inspired by classic rock, The Sword, whose new album **Age Of Winters** was just released, also use vintage equipment to make their heavy metal racket. Shutt admits the band scours eBay for aged equipment, but that they also find treasure in local guitar stores. "It's a matter of knowing what you need and listening to old records and asking why it sounds the

ganic, studio-treated vibe that comes from state of the art equipment. "The new Marshalls are all high end, with stuff built into them," the guitarist says, referring to Marshall Amplifiers. "It's a sterile sound. Older stuff sounds warmer and cleaner. When we were playing a show in NYC, we borrowed amps from another band, and we were noticeably off. We noticed how different we sounded. We felt bad, because we knew we could sound better with our old amps! The equipment is half the band. The guys in the band, yeah, we make the music, but it's our equipment that makes the sound."

Spoken like a man who knows what he wants and how he wants to sound. "It's heavy metal," says Shutt about his band's sonic output. "We keep it real basic. There used to be metal bands that sang on major labels, and there hasn't been anything like that since Iron Maiden."

He's right. After the advent of rap-rock, metal's reputation careened downhill, but The Sword are trying to get the scene back on the fast track. And they also get dubbed a "stoner rock" band, an association they tend to shy away from. The guitarist says. "Sleep was the best stoner rock band ever and

they had a certain sound to them, and we're a much tighter band. Stoner bands are sloppy and are often horribly recorded, and there is a charm to that, but we're not stoners. We want the recording to sound a lot tighter."

Furthermore, Shutt says, "We're trying to be sincere to true metal, like old Metallica and Van Halen. We don't want to have anything in common with what's going on in the world today. We don't deal with things that have already existed or currently exist."

KAYO DOT

Kayo Dot are what rock critics like to describe as avant-metal that takes risks and dares to think outside of the box. Kayo Dot have proven that they have the ability to

way it does," Shutt says of the band's decision to use vintage instruments. "It's always the way it was recorded and what was used that makes those records sound as good as they do!"

The Sword's passion for old equipment sprung out of their desire for raw, real sounds, as opposed to the inor-

THE SWORD FAST FACTS:

*The Sword started in singer JD Cronise's bedroom.

*The members of The Sword have worked their share of crappy day jobs, as well as meaningful day jobs among them sandwich shops and schools for the blind.

*The Sword were one of the hottest bands to play 2005's SXSW music industry convention. Every music critic was swooning over them.



KAYO DOT FAST FACTS:

*Driver started a band in Connecticut in 1996 called Maudlin Of The Well. It eventually morphed into Kayo Dot. Now, the members of Kayo Dot live in Boston, Massachusetts, with only two members from the original incarnation remaining.

*Driver says that because of the high brow, artsy nature of Kayo Dot's music, "a lot of people expect us to be really snooty but we're actually very friendly and unsenous people about a lot of things," Driver says. "Everything is a phallic joke with this band."

expand the parameters of the metal genre. Kayo Dot fuse instruments like violins, cellos, and trumpets with hard-bitten guitar riffs, and they constantly throw listeners for a loop on their latest, **Dowsing Anemone With Copper Tongue** (Robotic Empire).

o constantly do something different is difficult with popular music, since just about everything has already been done. But guitarist/singer/founder Toby Driver

isn't thrown by this conundrum. He doesn't see "making it new" as difficult.

"If being 'different' were deliberate, then it would be bull," the singer says with candor. "Secondly, I don't think everything original has been done at all; it's like saying we know all there is to know about the human body, the Earth, or science. It's very difficult for people to imagine things they have no experience with. I mean how many times have you come across a really simple invention in the store and thought 'Of course! Why didn't I think of that?!' It just takes a little more thought or creativity to bring ideas in that other people didn't have the interest in. Regardless, our music is about expressing ourselves and not really about being different. We just happen to have a different aesthetic sense than most other bands, so different music comes out."

It's refreshing to hear that Driver is not pretentious, even though his music is intellectually and aesthetically constructed. He thinks metal fans will be attracted to Kayo Dot because they are a breath of fresh air. "When conformity sets in, the [metal] genre becomes no different than radio pop. I don't think metal fans want that, and neither do I. Bands who push the envelope keep metal exciting and relevant. Our band does all the dark and visceral things that metal fans love, but we express it in ways that people aren't accustomed to hearing. Our music can help expand the vocabulary of metal and help other bands take metal even further into the future."

One of the ways Kayo Dot are expanding the vocabulary of metal is through their use of atypical instruments. "I think that the potential of this genre hasn't even had its surface scratched, and the idea of what metal is has stagnated," Driver explains. "People think metal equals guitars. What they should try to remember is that the reason different instruments even exist in the first place is to have different ways of saying things. So, I think that anyone who doesn't use instruments besides guitars is severely limiting themselves and maybe even rendering themselves redundant."

Thankfully, there is a band like Kayo Dot, daring to think outside of the normal constrictions of rock 'n roll and try something new and exploring potential.

DEMIRICOUS

"It's not typical," says Demiricous bassist and lead singer Nate Olp of his band's Metal Blade debut, **One**. "It's not what's going on right now, and it's not cool."

Those are pretty ballsy statements for such a new band to make, but on **One**, this Indianapolis-based band have the chops to back their confidence up. They even have a lead and a rhythm guitarist, which was popular in the

THE EDGE

HARD ROCK'S NEW STARS



DEMIRICOUS FAST FACTS:

"The band's name is completely made up. 'It has no frame of reference or image already pinned to it,' says Olp.

"Drummer Mike Rafferty is new to the band. Right after recording **One**, the band's previous drummer exited, but he was quickly replaced by Rafferty, who once drummed for Brand New Sin and was a roadie for Trivium.

"Olp, rhythm guitarist Scott Wilson and lead guitarist Dan Parrish are all skateboarders with sponsorships from a local skate shop. That's how they all met.

'80s! "We don't have your girlfriend's pants on or her hair-cut, like everyone's doing right now," the 26-year-old Olp continues. "Our music has no gimmick or image. It's a straight up, older style of metal."

Metal fans young and old are clamoring for a shot of classic metal, and Demiricous certainly administer a dose of old school solos and riffs on **One**, which has a very Swedish guitar sound à la The Haunted and At The Gates. The album also pays such homage to Slayer that we wouldn't be surprised if Kerry King and company came calling for a royalty check. But Demiricous are not copying their influences; they're expanding on them.

Olp and his cohorts want nothing more than to make metal music for a living. "We've all tried school. We've all tried jobs," he reveals. "It doesn't work for any of us, and we got this chance, so we took it because we wanted to do it so bad. Two years ago, we were a garage band in a way, and no one gave a crap. It's working out right now. We're still new, so we'll find out if we're *meant* to do this."

Olp also admits that the band started out frontloading their music with blast beats and crafting 7-minute, too-long songs. But after 2 years of writing and listening to themselves, they figured out what they want to sound like on **One**, a lean, mean metal machine. "All the fat has been cut off," he says. "Everyone in the band feels that At The Gates 'finished' the Swedish sound, so we actually try to steer clear of that, in terms of those styles of riffs. We want to sound meaner, tougher, and older, with the drum beats. We aim for more of a Slayer or old Sepultura sound. We didn't try, though. It just happened."

One does have tough, mean exterior, and it's got meat 'n potatoes riffs. That

comes from the fact that everyone in the band is a guitar player. "We have riff ideas coming from all four corners," Olp explains, illustrating that **One** was a complete creative collaboration. "I also play drums, so we can beat down on what's going to be the best groove. That background allows us to be so versatile, and we're still a new band and coming into our own. No band knows what they want to do till after their first album, living on the road, hanging out and playing. The ideas will keep flooding all the time."

CATHEDRAL

Cathedral are certainly not new to the game of heavy metal. They're British doom metal legends, and they've earned their status as progenitors of doom, stoking the fire that was started by their fellow countrymen, Black Sabbath. Cathedral have been a band for 16 years, and their latest album, **The Garden Of Unearthly Delights**, is their eighth record overall. But that hasn't stopped these doomsters from continuing to create sludgy hard rock by the shovelful.

"It's very easy to get complacent about what you do, and I think there's been danger for us suffering from that a couple of times over the last 15 years," said singer Lee Dorrian, who was once a member of grind/death outfit Napalm Death. "But I think that's only natural. But as soon as the idea of complacency

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CATHEDRAL FAST FACTS

*Dorrian always brings slippers and pajamas on tour with him. "People think that's strange, but I think that's just a relaxing luxury, really."

*He also is sure to bring razor blades on the road. "The older you get, the more hygienic you are."

*Dorrian also drinks Soymilk and claims to be "95% vegan." So what about the other 5%? Only Mr. Dorrian knows!

*Dorrian, who is a record collector who prefers vinyl, also runs his own label, dubbed Rise Above Records. "It's exciting to watch bands grow and evolve," he says. "That's one of the things that keeps me going in general in life, really. I get such a buzz out of that, and still do! Luckily, there's still groups around that are still breaking boundaries as far as I'm concerned."

starts creeping in, I start to really panic and I'm like, "NO! NO WAY!" We can't just sit there and expect everything's going to be fine. You always have to completely challenge yourself and try to push yourself further and try not to repeat yourself, and it's really hard not to repeat yourself with the kind of music we play."

Mr. Dorrian has a point. So much of today's metal is a retread of a retread, a copy of a copy, but Cathedral doesn't care about trends or trying to fit a mold. "Trying to find where we fit into the current metal scene always gets harder and harder. We've never been a band that's followed any kind of trends or even wanted to be part of a current trend," Dorrian contends. "That's probably one of the reasons why we've been around for so long, because we haven't jumped on any bandwagons. I like to consider the music we play as timeless, and we're just carrying it on, really. I think there's more of a sense of urgency to keep proving ourselves. We're following on a style that was invented... it's riff-based rock music, metal."

The Garden Of Unearthly Delights finds the band doing what they've done so well for so long. It's consistent, but it's not more of the same. The band even got slightly experimental with it. "There's a vibe to it that we haven't had on the last couple of albums," Dorrian says, like a proud parent beaming over their child. "It's like [there is an] energy to it. What makes a really good album is when there's a genuine vibe to it, when you can tell that the people who are playing the music really mean what they're doing and they're getting off on what they're doing. There's a certain element of that on this record."

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VELVET REVOLVER

MIND OVER MATTER

BY ROB ANDREWS

"We're so confident now that we're up to just about any challenge"

The irony of the situation is far from lost on Slash. The guitarist knows all-too-well that after their nothing-less-than-historic debut disc, **Appetite for Destruction**, his original band, Guns N' Roses, was never the same. Now, as he begins preparations to follow up **Contraband**, the somewhat less-historic, yet still significant premier release from his latest contingent, Velvet Revolver, the six-string superstar knows that the entire world will be watching and waiting. But such pressure seems to have not only motivated Slash, but his high-profile bandmates—vocalist Scott Weiland, bassist Duff McKagan, drummer Matt Sorum and rhythm guitarist Dave Kushner—as well. Indeed, at this very moment, the VR gang are hard at work on their second disc, a promised "concept" album that is designed to blow as many rock and roll loving minds as possible.

"We're so confident right now, that we feel like we're up to a challenge like this," Slash said. "There's a very different feeling inside this band at the moment. When we made the first album we were still getting to know each other as a band, and we were approaching everything in a kind of relaxed, laid-back manner. Now, after having success with **Contraband**, and after having been on tour for almost two years, things are very different. People know who we are. They have expectations of us."

As you read this, the contents of the band's conceptual second album are still very much under wraps. But expect those coverings to soon be removed, and what will be revealed is virtually guaranteed to get tongues a-wagging throughout the hard rock world. According to our on-the-scene sources, the primary impetus behind Velvet Revolver's ambitious recording plans stems from the ever-creative mind of Weiland. Even as far back as his days with the Stone Temple Pilots in the late '90s, the vocalist expressed his desires to push the creative envelope, stringing together a series of songs into a complete and unified "concept." Such things were relatively common back in the '60s and early '70s when the Who's **Tommy** and Pink Floyd's **The Wall** turned the contemporary music world on its proverbial ear. But since those halcyon days, such complex efforts have been few and far between.

"That's the kind of album I've been wanting to make since I was in STP," Weiland said. "It's a difficult thing to do, and no matter how hard you work on it, you never know when you've totally completed your task. But we've all been working towards that goal for the last few months, and that is still our primary ambition at the moment."

In other Weiland news, the now totally clean-and-sober frontman has also been contemplating the completion of a solo album that he had almost finished just prior to joining the VR brigade back in 2003. Many of you may recall that the singer has one previous solo effort to his credit, 1998's **12 Bar Blues**, a generally overlooked but often powerful collection that gave the first indication of a major rift existing within the STP camp. But this time Weiland insists that the appearance of another solo disc in no-way shows any dissatisfaction on his part with the other members of Velvet Revolver.

"No, not at all," he said. "The music on this solo album was basically done at the time I was asked to join this band. It's kind of strange for me to listen to those songs now because I was in a very different head space back then. Thankfully my life has taken a number of significant changes for the better since then."

Things are certainly cooking within the Velvet Revolver camp. Concept albums, solo albums, non-stop touring... it's been a veritable whirlwind of activity for these ever-savvy rockers. It's now been nearly three years since **Contraband** first lit up the rock and roll skies with its rugged riffs, volatile vocals and take-no-prisoners attitude. During that time the VR gang have continually proven their musical worth through a series of hit singles like *Fall to Pieces* and *Slither*, high-profile MTV videos and sold-out concert performances. For Velvet Revolver, however, all this success is far from unexpected. After all, the band's members past histories in such stellar outfits as G'N'R and STP virtually guaranteed a healthy degree of out-of-the-box media and fan recognition. But the simple fact of the matter is that it's now been well over a decade since G'NR were at the top of their game, and even STP's glory days seem like they are fast becoming a distant memory. So while their platinum-covered success certainly wasn't a surprise, it was greeted with a major sigh of relief from the entire VR contingent.

"Success is something you *never* take for granted," McKagan said. "That's never been our style, anyway. We've never been very good at trying to play nice and fit in with everyone else. We've always been much better at rubbing everyone's face in the mud and just doing our own thing. This is a very dangerous band on a number of levels—and we may be the first dangerous band that's come along in a long time. Our goal has been to go out there and cause as much chaos as possible."

Despite the fact that their core members are now precariously close to the age of 40, it seems as if little of their past "bad boy" reputation has dissipated with the passing years. Oh sure, Weiland may have mended his ways, and both Duff and Slash may no longer choose to perpetually live life on the razor's edge, where their past activities marked them as among hard rock's most notorious—and self-destructive—forces. These days these rockers all seem far more at peace with both themselves and with those around them, while their music remains as "dangerous" as ever.

"It's really cool to feel great, and to be with people whose sole goal is to make great music," Slash said. "People can say anything they want about me and about this band. All we care about is that they listen to the music. We've each had so many opportunities in our lives. Some of them we've taken advantage of, and others have slipped through our fingers. Finding the right people to play with, and the right opportunity to present what you're doing isn't easy. So that's why I'm still so excited about this band."

FAVORITE SONG—VELVET REVOLVER



VELVET REVOLVER

HP

QUEENSRYCHE

BY ROY WALKER

Long before there was a so-called Seattle Scene, long before the likes of Pearl Jam, Soundgarden and Alice In Chains supposedly first put the Emerald City on the rock and roll map, and long before the Pacific Northwest became the Mecca of '90s rock and roll life, there was a band called Queensryche. Back at a time when the mousse-abusing "hair bands" from Los Angeles were still dominating the sales charts and MTV play lists, this multi-faceted Seattle-based quintet came along to help reaffirm both the artistic merit and social consciousness of the hard rock form. Vocalist Geoff Tate, guitarists Michael Wilton and Chris DeGarmo (since replaced by Mike Stone), bassist Eddie Jackson and drummer Scott Rockenfield were never the hippest, coolest or hottest band on the rock and roll scene...but at certain moments in their lengthy career they may well have been the best.

It was 25 years ago that this adventurous, ambitious band first began making noise across the picturesque Puget Sound, laying down a brand of quasi-operatic art/metal that served as an effective counterpoint to the cars-and-girls musical mentality that characterized the era's El Lay scene. Through such albums as their landmark 1988 release *Operation: mindcrime*, Queensryche helped expand the normally stringent bounds of the rock form, proving that a band need not necessarily produce easily digestible, radio-ready, three-minute doses of musical magic in order to reach platinum paradise. In fact the mere notion of "hit singles" and "heat seeking videos" seemed somewhat alien to this band's artistically-inclined mode of operations. Yet despite all of their best intentions, Queensryche still managed to wrack up a string of instantly-identifiable hits that turned a generation of followers into permanent members of the 'Ryche fan club.

These days, however, Queensryche have long since realized that a new rock and roll day has dawned. The music scene continues to evolve at a dizzying pace, and amid the interchangeable gangsta rappers and insipid pop priestesses that dominate the scene, this ever-savvy unit know they must work harder than ever to effectively reestablish their position within the form's ever-shifting frontiers. It's now been 18 years since *Mindcrime* first rocketed the 'Ryche to the apex of the rock world, and since then the group has admittedly gone through their commercial ups

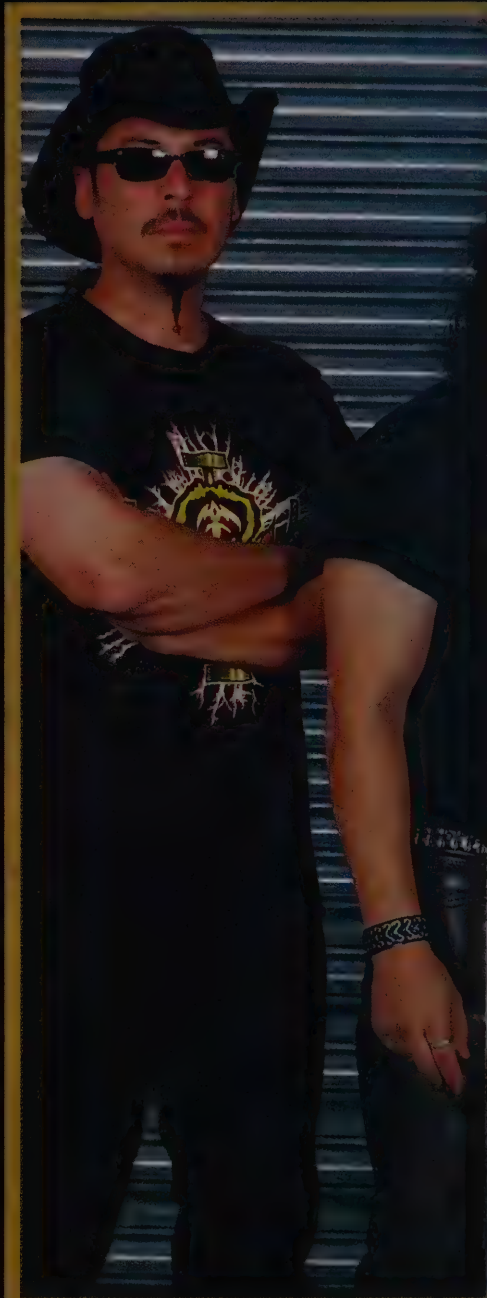
and downs. Never the fastest working band in the land (Queensryche has released just nine studio discs during their lengthy career) they've continually chosen to feature quality over quantity. And in 2006 the group has made an epic decision; both as a response to fan demand, and to satisfy their own ever-expanding artistic cravings, they've decided to release *Operation: mindcrime II*, a disc that picks up the complex storyline of their original masterwork and carries it into the 21st Century.

"One of the reasons we decided to do *Mindcrime II* was quite simply because the fans wanted it," Tate said. "We had toured last year performing the original *Mindcrime* in its entirety,

"The reason we did this album was simple; the fans wanted it."

and the response was incredible. That's what got us thinking about updating the story and presenting it in a fresh context. It was always our intention to come back and complete the story that was presented in the original—it was left rather open-ended. It needed a fitting conclusion, and we were only too happy to supply it."

With its lyrical story-line placed 20 years after the original *Mindcrime* took place, the band's new work—much like its predecessor—is an intricate and at times numbingly complex tale revolving around the lead character, a political prisoner named Nikki, and his battles with a mysterious underground operator named Dr. X. In the 15 songs that comprise *Mindcrime II* Queensryche present a thought-provoking scenario tinged with revenge, deceit and intrigue. On



THE OPERATION CONTINUES

such songs as *I'm American*, *One Foot in Hell* and *If I Could Change It All*, the band creates a sound and style true to their original work—but one that is clearly aimed at the volatile times in which we now live.

"With the whole political climate in America being what it is today, this seemed like the perfect time to do this album," Tate said. "It doesn't directly take on any current news topic, but it's not very hard to read between the lines. The story here centers around the

ings, and his search for eventual salvation."

With a new album on a new label, and a new tour (featuring BOTH *Mindcrimes* played in their entirety), all on their agenda, it would clearly seem as if 2006 has become one of the most significant years in Queensrÿche's long and glorious history. Okay, so perhaps fan interest in this unit's work isn't quite as intense as it was in the late-'80s when the original *Mindcrime*, and its follow-up, *Empire*, helped make Queensrÿche one of the most respected bands in the world.

Slipknot and Korn than to this unit's brand of cerebral metal. But Tate and his men sense that this new generation are also anxious to understand the intricacies of the on-going 'Ryche phenomenon. With *Mindcrime II* they have been given a crash course in pure hard rock creativity.

"It's great that younger fans are interested in us, right along-side those fans who have stayed loyal throughout the years," Tate explained. "At this point in our career, we're not going to start concerning ourselves with



character of Nikki, who has spent the last 20 years in prison. How does he handle his desire for revenge? I find that a fascinating aspect of human life—how we handle our response to situations that we encounter...ones that are often beyond our control. *Mindcrime II* is about how Nikki handles these conflicting feel-

Today, these guys are older and wiser—yet no less determined to battle against the restrictive limits of the hard rock style in a manner that perhaps only they can. Indeed, Queensrÿche are well aware that a new generation of fans have come along, many of whom seem more attuned to the blatant efforts presented by the likes of

staking out our turf. We're quite confident with who and what we are. We're not trying to prove anything to anyone. All we want to do is come up with some really interesting, creative ideas that stimulate us. I think we've done that very well throughout our career, and the new album is certainly no exception."

Sully Erna is a unique rock and roll animal. When Godsmack's main man strolls down the street traffic doesn't unusually come to a screeching halt.

Heads don't turn, women don't wail in lust and children don't scream in dismay. Indeed, Sully seems to get along just fine by just being Sully.

Despite all of the high-profile fame that has come Erna's way over the last seven years, Godsmack's dynamic frontman has never particularly wanted to exude the kind of headline-grabbing charisma guaranteed to land a Rock God on mainstream tabloid pages or in the lead story on *Entertainment Tonight*. The fact is, Erna doesn't quickly stand out from the crowd. At average height, average build and average looks, Erna is a quintessen-

combined total of almost ten million copies. But somehow Erna seems to be handling his "difficult" situation quite nicely. With Godsmack's new collection, **IV**, adding another glowing chapter to this Boston-based band's already stimulating musical resume, it seems as if Erna's "Q-factor" is only going to continue to rise as the Smack keep touring the world in support of their latest disc.

"You never know from year to year how fans might change, and how they may react to the new material," Erna said. "It's very rewarding to know that they appreciate all the hard work you've put in to deliver an exciting new album to them."

It is clear that while he both loves and craves the frenzied support Godsmack's fans provide, Erna still isn't always com-

there still may remain a myriad of mysteries surrounding this eminently exciting band, but would any of us want it any other way? After all, when this unit burst seemingly from nowhere in 1998 with their **Godsmack** album, it was the mystery, the mystical musical magic that seemed to envelope the band like a harbor fog, that aided in their amazingly rapid transformation from music biz outsiders to cutting-edge leaders of the then-burgeoning New Metal movement. Fans everywhere were drawn to the quasi-occult messages contained within *Voodoo* and *Keep Away*, as well as to the pulsating, hypnotic rhythms produced during the band's frenetic live shows. They all added up to create the rock-solid base of support upon which the Smack has now added another key

building block in their battle plan for success.

"On one hand surviving long enough to make a fourth album means that you've made it over some of the major steps in your career," Erna said. "But

BY P.J. MERKLE

GODSMACK

GEARING UP

"When I'm off-stage I have no interest in being the center of attention."

tial rock and roll "blender", the kind of guy you've got to be told who he is when he walks into a crowded room.

But once Erna and his bandmates—guitarist Robbie Merrill, bassist Tony Rombola and drummer Shannon Larkin—take to the concert stage, it's an entirely different story. Up there under the harsh glare of the spotlight, Erna seems to suddenly transform into a larger-than-life personality. As he stands bare-chested, his numerous tattoos glistening with sweat, he's clearly the king of all he surveys. And once he opens his mouth to sing, it becomes instantly clear why Erna is a bonafide rock star—whether he wants to admit it or not.

"When you do this for a living, you accept the fact that you're going to be in the public eye," he said. "I enjoy it, and I want it. It goes with being in a successful band. But when I'm off-stage I have no interest in being the center of attention. I'd much rather hang out with my friends and family, enjoy a beer or two and just go about my life. Sometimes living what you might want to call a 'normal' life is hard when you're traveling around the world, living out of a suitcase for a year at a time. But I do the best I can to keep everything in focus."

It's easy to understand Erna's "predicament." Keeping life in proper focus can be a challenge for anyone in a group whose three albums—**Godsmack**, **Awake** and **Faceless**—have now sold a

fortable with their over-the-top zeal. At times over the last decade, though he desired to be treated like "just another guy from Boston", he found his life turned upside down by legions of dedicated 'Smack followers. Just when he wanted focus placed squarely on the diverse musical reactants that comprise Godsmack's darkly brooding metal anthems, often he was asked about his belief in the Wiccan religion. And at times when he sought out praise for the volatile, vitriolic sounds featured on their albums, all the voracious recording industry wanted to know was what Godsmack's next video was going to look like.

"I understand why people focus on certain things, and why the media asks about other things, but I do wonder why they tend to overlook a lot of the issues that I think are kind of interesting about this band and the music we make," he said. "But that's okay with us. As long as they relate to it on whatever level they want, that's fine. That's all I can ask."

Now Erna and his bandmates have answered the various questions thrown their way in the best possible manner—by releasing a new album that expands upon every artistic element presented on their previous best selling discs. Sure,

on the other hand, longevity brings its own unique set of problems and pressures. If you want to be a really successful band, this is where you often begin to separate the pretenders from the contenders."

After ten years of hard work designed to keep putting Godsmack over the top, Erna is well aware that there always come critical moments in every band's career. 2006 may prove to be just such a moment. Sure, this hard hitting unit had already scored big with their previous albums and tours, but in some quarters questions still lingered surrounding this band's long-term impact on the rock scene. But with the instant chart-topping acclaim heaped upon **IV**, any speculation that these guys were merely shooting stars racing across the popular music horizon has been properly cast asunder.

"There is a degree of satisfaction with having four hit albums," Erna said. "I'd be lying if I said that I ever really doubted that this one would be successful, but it still is a bit of a relief to know that all the time and hard work you put into its creation has been appreciated, and rewarded by the fans buying it. When you make an album like this, so much of your energy goes into it."



SULLY ERNA

HP

COMIN' AT YOU

SAME QUESTION, DIFFERENT BANDS

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

Rock and rollers live on tour. It's how they survive, make their money and fans, how they pay their bills and get the word out about their latest album. It's a tough lifestyle, because the comforts of home and hearth are far, far away. So, for this month's *Coming At You*, we asked a bunch o' rockers to give us their top tour essentials, to reveal the things they need to survive on the rock 'n roll road. And not every artist listed something 'tangible.' Things like 'alone time' kept popping up! Future rockers, save this information for when *your* band hits the road!

Peter Wentz Fall Out Boy

Fall Out Boy's latest album, the shrewd pop/punk/rock gem **From Under The Cork Tree**, has been certified platinum. So it's no surprise that this Chicago quartet are road dogs. Here's what bassist Pete Wentz is sure to pack in his travel bag.

***Baby wipes.** "So you can do the 'baby wipe shower' when you're done playing." Rock 'n rollers *do* work up a sweat.

***Sidekick portable device.** "I am addicted to the Internet. I want it in my brain." Well, until someone invents Internet chips to be implanted in brains, a T-Mobile sidekick will have to do!

***iPod.** A common answer, but Wentz brings his "for bus parties, to get your dance on!"

***Uncrustables.** "They are sandwiches, pre-made without crusts. It's all I eat." Ah, the comforts of home.

***Notebooks.** "To write in." Makes sense, since Wentz pens all of FOB's lyrics and has written a graphic novel.

Aaron Beddard Bane

Massachusetts hardcore band Bane released their latest, **The Note**, through Equal Vision. The band doesn't tour incessantly, but when they do, singer Aaron Beddard knows what he needs in his knapsack.

***iPod.** "I know it's cliché, but if I can bring one thing over a change of boxer shorts, I am bringing an iPod. You need an escape for your own little space when you are around the same dudes in a van. I come off as antisocial because I am behind my headphones a lot of the time."

***Books.** "I need other thoughts in my head other than how long the drive is." Sounds like Beddard has this tour thing down pat.

***Journal.** "I can write anything in my head, what happened last night, or what I am seeing outside the window."

Brian Venable Lucero

Lucero are a twangy rock band that have chronicled their life on the road on their DVD, *Dreaming In America*, which is quite possibly the most accurate portrayal of a small band's travels from venue to venue that we at **Hit Parader** have ever seen! It's a video diary. Lucero's latest album, **Nobody's Darlings**, is out now and they have been on tour promoting it forever, but that didn't stop guitarist/band founder Brian Venable from providing his list of tour necessities.

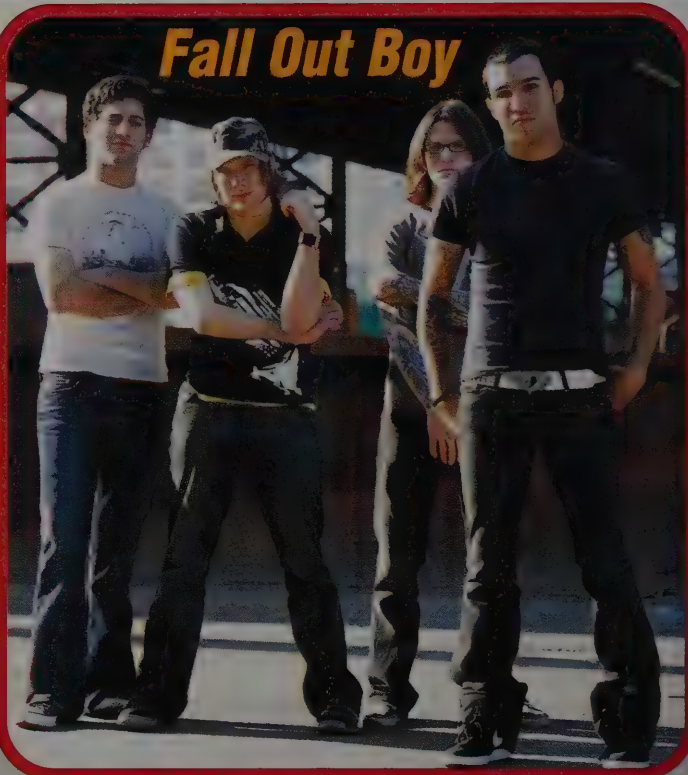
***Identification.** "Because you can't get in the club, drink, or play a show without it." Practical and absolutely necessary.

***Booze.** "This makes time go by faster and is the great social equalizer but if you insist on drinking so much you'll need a..."

***Full time driver.** "That's usually a tour manager or merch dude. They'll stay sober so you can tell people 'Yes, I do sleep all day in a van and then play rock and roll all night for a living.'"

***Working equipment.** "...It worked at soundcheck!" Old equipment. It can work one minute, and crap out the next, so make sure yours works, and not

Fall Out Boy



Lucero



just at soundcheck, Venable advises!

***Alone time.** "This is the most valuable item of all when you can find it. Sometimes, if you can't actually get away, headphones or burying your nose in a book will have to do."

Marta *Bleeding Through*

Bleeding Through's third album, *The Truth*, is an angry, venomous slab of keyboard laced metalcore. It's brutal. The coolest thing about BT is that they have a girl in the band. Marta—no last name, like Madonna—may look like a delicate yet dark little flower, but this girl knows how to survive on the rough 'n tumble road.

***iPod.** "I live with it. It's also our way of having privacy to get away from each other, the other members of the band." Sounds like Marta and Bane's Beddard share a brain! They said they same thing!

***Sleep.** If you don't sleep on the road, you can't play well so Miss Marta makes sure she naps.

***Shower.** "It's a constant struggle to get sleep and to get clean, so I shower as much as I can on the road." Okay, you can't bring a shower with you, but you can make sure you shower as much as possible on the road! Smelly vans are no fun!

***Healthy vegetarian food.** That's another thing this keyboardist seeks out when she's far from home.

***Coffee.** "I love it. I need it or I'm kinda grouchy." Caffeine is the friend of many a band member!

Alexi Laiho *Children Of Bodom*

"All I ever wanted from life was to make a living from music. Everything else that Children Of Bodom have done has been a bonus," says guitar shredder Alexi Laiho. "I was so bad at school. I dropped out when I was 16. School was not for me. This is. People complain about tours, saying they miss their home or their girlfriends. I say, if you don't dig it, get out. You want to rock, dude!" That's the guitarist/singer's philosophy on his band and life on the road, in a nut-

Ville Valo *HIM*

HIM are a cult band. But with the release of their major label debut, *Dark Light*, their cult status is about to change to superstar status. Finnish frontman Ville Valo has an affinity for the dark side, and often writes songs about love lost. But despite his often maudlin lyrical rantings, he tours efficiently, traveling as lightly as possible. He was once robbed of his cell phone while on tour, but felt great when learning how to live sans a cell.

***A book.** "I need that, definitely."

***Asthma medicine.** Because he needs to be able to breathe!

***Passport.** "To get around." Practical and more of a necessity than anything else on this list!

***Nyquil.** Valo claims the over the counter medicine "helps me to sleep, and everyone is ill when on tour, and you can never be sure how close you are to a drugstore." Smart man. Germs are prevalent on tour!

***Ear plugs.** "To help me sleep on the flights with screaming little kids around."



Andrew *The Receiving End Of Sirens*

The Receiving End Of Sirens are a relatively new band, but they tour like seasoned veterans. They just released *Between The Heart And The Synapse*, and are spending their time on the road, winning over fans from city to city. TREOS's Andrew ponied up his tour essentials here.

***Aero bed.** "I never leave home without it. You can turn practically any floor space of any dingy apartment into your own comfortable little suite."

***Books.** Another popular

shell. Below is his list of tour essentials.

***Whiskey.** "I always have to have back up with me."

***Smokes.** Because rock dudes have tobacco habits.

***Eyeliner.** "Very important. I use eyeliner. Black." We detect a note of sarcasm in Laiho's voice.

***iPod.** "Filled with music." We told you this was a popular answer!

***Razor.** "To keep groomed." Hygiene is difficult to achieve on the road, but at least he's trying!

answer. "You encounter quite a few long drives out there on tour. It passes the time quickly."

***Food.** "Things like granola bars, Cliff bars, tuna fish, Gatorade. It's all great for mid-day or midnight snacks when there is no Taco Bell in plain sight."

***iPod.** "Sometimes, it's the only friend you have."

***Cell phone.** "To stay in touch with family and friends. Everyone needs a cell phone in this day and age, especially when traveling."

FROM THE HIT PARADER

VAULT

Each month we bring you an incredible feature direct from the voluminous **Hit Parader** vault—an article that appeared on these hallowed pages exactly ten years ago! Without changes, editing or updates, these stories provide an amazing glimpse into this thing we call rock and roll, dealing with the form's most famous—and in some cases, infamous—stars. So direct from our May, 1996 issue is this "vintage" interview with the inimitable Deep Purple.

Smoke On The Water, Space Truckin', My Woman From Tokyo, Perfect Strangers... for many followers of the hard rock form, the music of Deep Purple has formed a veritable soundtrack for their lives. This legendary British band has encountered more ups and downs than a Coney Island roller coaster during their 35 year existence, yet they've managed to battle back each and every time to both survive and prosper. Throughout their career, the band has created a series of unforgettable albums, including **In Rock**, **Made In Japan** and **Fireball**, all of which served to influence succeeding generations of rock acts as few other recordings have done. But despite all of their past accomplishment, in a number of ways 1996 is the dawning of a new era for these veteran rockers. Gone—once again—is band guitarist Ritchie Blackmore. In his stead is former Dixie Dregs axe master Steve Morse who joins the remainder of the group's classic Mark II lineup—vocalist Ian Gillan, bassist Roger Glover, keyboardist Jon Lord and drummer Ian Paice—on the Purple People's latest effort, **Purpendicular**.

"Our situation with Ritchie has always been an unpredictable one," Glover said. "He is a personality that is quite different, and at times somewhat hard to understand. As it happened, in the middle of our last tour in 1993, Ritchie just decided to leave. He had apparently had enough. We really didn't know what to do. We thought we might have to cancel the tour, which we didn't want to do for a variety of reasons. Luckily for us, someone recommended that we contact Joe Satriani to see if he'd finish the tour with us. He did, but he was committed to his own pro-

jects, so again we were left wondering what to do next. That's when Steve came into our lives. At first we thought it might be on a temporary basis, but after just a few weeks of working together, we knew that this was going to last."

After overcoming their initial differences, the freshly aligned Purple lineup set to work on creating a new album. By mid-1995, the group traveled to Orlando, Florida to kick around some ideas, many of which were to evolve into the cornerstones of **Purpendicular**. From the surprisingly Southern groove of *The Aviator*, to the funky riffs of *Ted The Mechanic*, their new disc sees these old rock and roll dogs showing off all of their new tricks. While Lord's traditional keyboard runs are still present, and Gillan's trademark yelp can be heard cutting through the instrumental mix on *A Touch Away* and *Rosa's Cantina*, this disc belongs wholeheartedly to Morse, and the band couldn't be happier about it.

"Having somebody new in the band was extremely thrilling," Gillan said. "It was like having a honeymoon period of wild, uninhibited musical sex. The four long-time members of the band have a collective consciousness that will always put the Deep Purple stamp on whatever we touch. But having Steve in the band brought a fresh, new element to the proceedings that kept everyone on their toes. We were so into it at times that we actually had to be dragged out of the studio."

Despite all of the band's up-beat posturings, however, a troubling fact is that for the first time in their history, Deep Purple no longer has a major label recording deal in America. **Purpendicular**

has been released on an indie label, Prominent Records, which is actually a subsidiary of CMC International—the musical home of such former metal chart-toppers as Warrant and Slaughter.



Such a situation does little to deter the enthusiasm of these legendary rockers, though. They've been to the mountain top and surveyed all that there is to survey. At this point in their lives, the members of

Deep Purple seem content to merely be together, be happy and be making some of the best rock and roll music on earth.

"There's an attitude in the this band that's unlike anything I've ever experi-

enced before," Morse said. "It's a true band—there's no competition between the musicians. It's a very healthy, fun atmosphere, and I consider myself very fortunate to be part of it."

Metal Musings

BY MIKE G

For 17 years Mike Greenblatt was the editor of Metal Maniacs magazine. During that time he was in constant contact with the metal musicians who inhabit the outer extremes of the hard rock world. Now he brings his voluminous knowledge—as well as his deft writing skills—to the pages of Hit Parader.—Ed.

Those readers (like me) who regularly thrill to the sordid stories of NBC-TV's *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* know rapper Ice-T plays a cop. What makes this ironic is that back in the day, Ice-T's heavy metal band, **BODY COUNT**, hit the public hard with *Cop Killer*, a song so controversial that Time Warner pressured Sire Records to delete the "offensive" track off future pressings of the album. Well, Body Count is back bigtime with *Live In L.A.* (Escapi Music)4, a DVD from Hollywood's legendary Troubadour that pulls no punches and, yes, includes *Cop Killer* as well as a new song, *Murder 4 Hire*, slated to be the title track of their new studio album later this year.

What makes this DVD so bangin' is that there's a fire in the eyes of Ice. It was, he tells *Hit Parader*, "a make-or-break gig." Could this band survive after the death of drummer Beatmaster V in '96 from leukemia; the death of bassist Mooseman in '00 from a drive-by shooting; and the death of guitarist D-Roc in 2004 from lymphoma?

Yes, yes and yes.

The new Body Count—with only two original members left in vocalist Ice-T and the amazing Hendrixian guitarist Ernie C—is harder, heavier and actually scarier in concert. These 17 songs—with new members Vincent Price, bass; OT, drums; and rhythm guitarist Bendrix (who dresses up like Hannibal Lector)—are fast, loud and intense. It was the first time the band ever performed without D-Roc and their songs have never sounded so hungry.

Six albums in and **THE HELLACOPTERS** are making good on their international history of cult worship on *Rock & Roll Is Dead* (Liquor and Poker Music). There's a reason why this Swedish band garners the type of crazed allegiance usually reserved for the likes of Motorhead or AC/DC. They're pure. They go back to an allegiance of their own to what rock and roll is supposed to be all about: fun fun fun with a little danger thrown in. Started in '94 by singer Nicke Andersson of Entombed and guitarist Dregen of Backyard Babies (with bassist Kenny Hakansson and drummer Robert Eriksson of The Sewergrooves), they came to prominence after Kiss heard their original three-track demo (which now goes for over \$150 on eBay) and tapped them to open up the Scandinavian leg of their 1997 tour.



It took them 26 hours to record their *Supperschitty To The Max* debut. The *Payin' The Dues* followup added keyboardist Anders Lindstrom. *Grande Rock* hit in '99. Dregen then quit to concentrate fulltime on Backyard Babies, whose new *Live Live In Paris* should be out by the time you read this. His replacement is Strings Dahlqvist who debuted on *High Visibility* in '01. By *The Grace Of God* hit in '02.

Recorded in their Stockholm hometown, produced by Chips Kiesbye, *Rock & Roll Is Dead* contains typical Hellacopters humor on everything from the rock star life to couch potatoes and it does it with a no-holds-barred non-stop rock approach that will have you up and howling by the end of track #1, *Before The Fall*. If those death metal yowls make you reach for the eject button, if you're tired of those hardcore barking dog vocals, if you're bored with another too-slow sludgy Sabbath retread, get on the damn Hellacopter already and start to rock 'cause this is what it's supposed to be like. *Rock & Roll Is Dead*. Long live The Hellacopters.

So much to get to yet so much to discard. It's all in a music journalist's merry-go-round life so instead of focusing in on one more, let's do the grab-bag deal and just start listenin' to the good stuff in an effort to maximize your buying dollars...

Members of Brother Kane and Queensryche populate *SLAVE TO THE SYSTEM*, whose self-titled Spitfire Records debut tips its hat to bands like The Who, Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple and Thin Lizzy. It's a keeper.

Mimi's Magic Moment by **SALEM HILL** (ProgRock Records) is the band's eighth album. Comprised of four epic tracks just under 20 minutes each, sounds abound with violins, flutes, piano, mallets, guitars, drums and a 12-stringed bass. Neal Morse adds guest lead vocals on one track and the whole thing reeks of tremendous musicianship and humor.

Want punk? *Shut Up And Take It* by **THE PINK SWORDS** (Gearhead Records) has the Austin, Texas sextet getting faster and faster on each track.

Then, of course, there's always **EPHEL DUATH** and their confusing *Pain Necessary To Know* album (Earache). It's going to take some listens to get used to this one. It's insane. It's not jazz but it's jazzy. It's not metal but it's metallic. And it's not funk but it's funky in a zigzag whiteboy way. If Primus, Mr. Bungle, Dillinger Escape Plan and, especially, the music of avant-garde composer John Zorn ever made its way to your turntable, then you might want to take a chance on Epher Duath, a trio consisting of guitarist/vocalist/synthesizer guru Davide Tiso, bassist Fabio Fecchio and singer Luciano Lorusso.

Other albums that have rocked my world this month include *Layers Of Lies* by **DARKANE** (Nuclear Blast Records), *Their Rock Is Not Our Rock* by **FIREBALL MINISTRY** (Liquor & Poker Records), *Complications: Trilogy Of Intricacy* by **AGE OF SILENCE** (The End Records), *Portals To Uphobia* by **DETONATION** (The End Records), *Showdown* by **BARCODE** (Nuclear Blast), *Withering To Death* by Japanese rock upstarts **DIR EN GREY** (Warcon Enterprises) and *W.A.R.P.E.D.* by **CHRIS CAFFERY** (Black Lotus Records).

I hope these "Musings" helped lead you to some strange and far-away musical lands.

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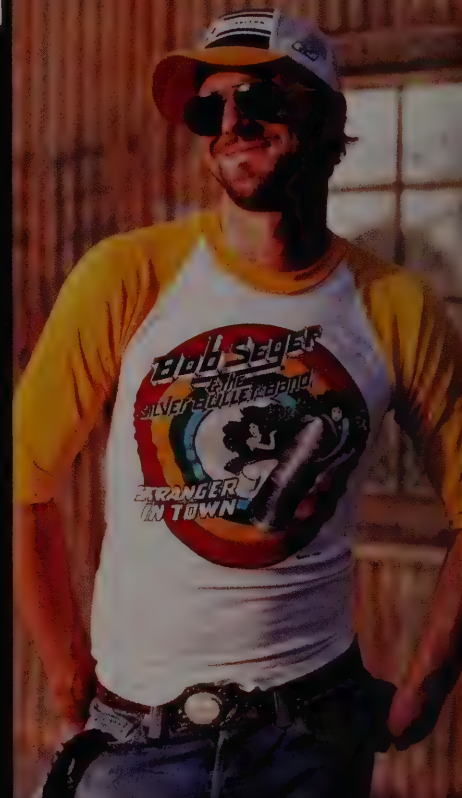
HUCK JOHNS

Hard Rockin' Man

BY
RYAN
HARDING

Some guys were just born to rock. You can count Huck Johns among that lucky crew. As proven throughout his self-titled debut disc, this 29 year-old Detroit native doesn't hold anything back when it comes to delivering the straight-from-the-hip, guitar-powered brand of hard rock that he favors. Nah, Ol' Huck doesn't seem to care that his Nugent-meets-AC/DC stylings may have been better suited for the musical climate of the 1970s than for today's hip-hopping, emo-loving world. In fact, this do-it-yourself rocker seems to revel in the notion that his power-chord driven anthems fly in the face of 21st Century convention... and that they do it with style, power and unbridled passion.

point. Indeed, it is both refreshing and invigorating to listen to the contents of **Huck Johns**. Those booming guitars (most supplied by Johns' writing-mate, current Buckcherry guitarist Keith Nelson), those from-the-gut vocals, those stick-to-your-ribs melodies... they all add up to deliver a healthy dose of "classic rock" energy—but with a decidedly ac-courant edge. On songs like *Fever*, *Kill Everything* and the disc's first single, the Angus-on-steroids-flavored *Oh Yeah*, Johns manages to ignite the too-long dormant spark of "arena rock" passions, in the process hopefully inspiring a new generation of bands and fans alike to pick up the gauntlet of "true" rock and roll. He even throws in a spirited cover of



stand. Maybe I can play a small part in helping them get the point."

It's not as if Johns has been feverishly working on some fiendish plan to take over the rock and roll world. In fact, at the ripe-old age of 29 (positively *ancient* for a hard rocking "rookie"), he's already paid his dues by getting his hands dirty in factories and repair shops throughout the Midwest. He also found time to play a virtual beach bum during his four year

"I want people to be playing some of these songs a long, long time from now."

stint in LA, a period when many of the ideas behind his album first came together—often between surfing sessions. But maybe the fact is that a guy needs a little seasoning in order to sing and play with the heart-felt passions that Johns displays throughout his debut disc. This isn't throw-away "fluff rock", stuff designed for instant consumption and easy digestion. This is music that Johns wants to stand up to the ageless work of his idols. He knows all-too-well that only the test of time will provide him with the true satisfaction he seeks.

"It must be incredibly satisfying to people like Alice Cooper and Ted Nugent to know that 30 years after they recorded some of their classic songs people are still playing them and digging them," he said. "That's the real test—will people remember you after your first moment in the spotlight has come and gone. That's one of the things that motivates me. I want people to be playing some of these songs a long, long time from now."



"I'm from Detroit, so I grew up on things like Ted Nugent, the MC5 and Alice Cooper," he said. "That's this city's rock and roll heritage. My only regret was that during the early-'90s, when I was first getting into all this stuff, nobody seemed to be playing it, and too few people were listening to it. Wouldn't it be great if we had a revival of '70s rock right now? I think the music scene could sure use a dose of that energy."

We're certainly not here to argue that

Ramblin' Gamblin' Man, from another Detroit rock icon, Bob Seger, for good measure.

"It's kind of sad to hear a lot of today's music," he said. "What passes for rock doesn't have any spirit. All the rappers have taken over as the guys who are living the 'larger than life' style; that used to be what rockers did! I think it's time to get back some of that attitude, and this kind of music goes hand-in-hand with that. There was an aura to the great rock of the past that today's fans just don't seem to under-

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45827 45475 45509 45784 45506 45796 45796

The image displays a collection of 20 vinyl records, arranged in a grid-like fashion on a red background. The records are from various heavy metal bands, including Slayer, Megadeth, Anthrax, and others. Each record is shown with its cover art and the band's name. The records are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some records placed vertically and others horizontally. The background is a solid red color, and the records are arranged in a way that they are easily visible and identifiable.

Record	Band	Year	Label
Slayer	Slayer	1986	Reprise
Slayer	Slayer	1987	Reprise
Slayer	Slayer	1988	Reprise
Slayer	Slayer	1989	Reprise
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Slayer	Slayer	2066	Reprise
Slayer	Slayer	2067	Reprise
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Slayer	Slayer	2070	Reprise
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Slayer	Slayer	2074	Reprise
Slayer	Slayer	2075	Reprise
Slayer	Slayer	2076	Reprise
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Slayer	Slayer	2078	Reprise
Slayer	Slayer	2079	Reprise
Slayer	Slayer	2080	Reprise
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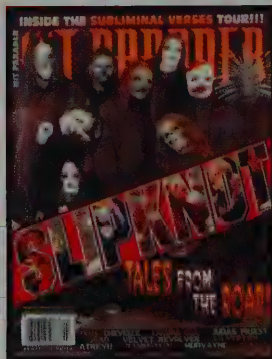
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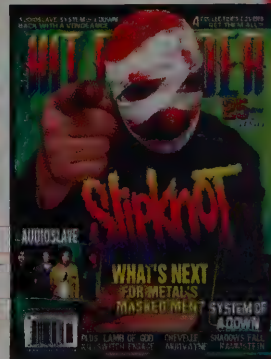
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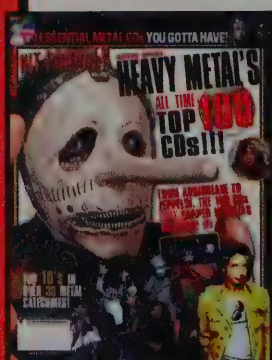
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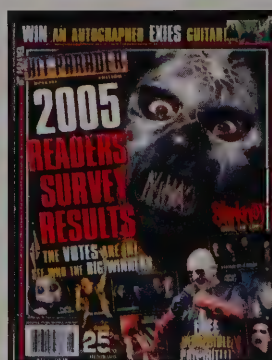
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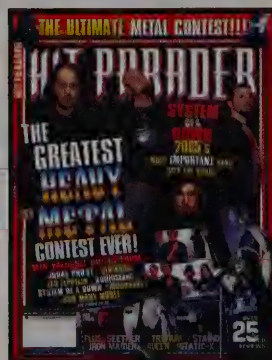
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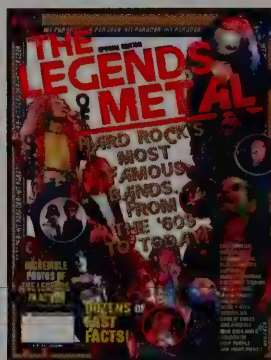
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INTERVIEWS!

Things are hotter than ever in the world of Slipknot. Indeed, in many ways this is the start of a new day, a new era and possibly a new revolution for the one and only Knot. For d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Gray, guitarist Chris Fehn, drummer Joey Jordison, keyboardist Craig Jones, percussionist Mick Thompson and vocalist Corey Taylor (also known to their ever-loyal followers as 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) it's time to focus all of their collective energies into once again becoming the most infamous heavy metal band on Earth. Now with the appearance of their new album, Vol. 3 (The Subliminal Verses), and the start of their various world-wide tours, you'd have to be both blind and deaf not to note that this coverall-wearing, mask-bearing, hard rocking unit from the wilds of Des Moines, Iowa, has returned to the scene just in time to give the entire metal world a much needed kick in the pants. With all that in mind, Hit Parader offers this salute to the one and only Slipknot in the form of our incredible poster special.

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SLIPKNOT AD

TOYS IN THE ATTIC

THE COOLEST GAMES & GEAR

BY FRANK CAFIERO

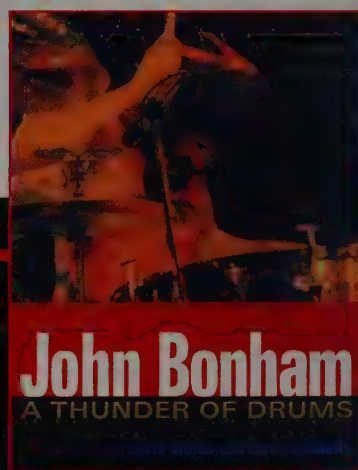
JOHN BONHAM A THUNDER OF DRUMS

Led Zeppelin's John Bonham was the godfather of hard rock drumming. Courtied away from more lucrative offers, Bonham joined the new band in 1968, helping create such iconic classics as *Whole Lotta Love*, *Kashmir*, *Rock & Roll* and of course *Stairway To Heaven*. As Zeppelin took centerstage in rock history, Bonham perfected the unmistakable drum patterns that now dominate the lexicon of rock drumming. His style was so integral to the group's music, they disbanded immediately after Bonham's sudden death in 1980.

A Thunder of Drums goes in-depth into his formative years, as a young Bonham working as a carpenter, discovers his love of drumming. Getting tips and jobs wherever he could, Bonham learned from local rock and jazz drummers while he bounced from one local band to another.

Bonham was a big bear of a guy but not without his own fears and anxieties that would later lead to drinking, drugs and ultimately his death. He hated flying and leaving his family, preferring to stay home on his farm with his wife and son or hang out at the local pub with a group of friends. This is the Bonham only relatives and close friends knew.

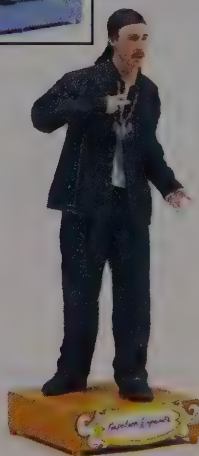
A Thunder of Drums by Chris Welch and Geof Nicholls features rare photos and detailed analysis of his greatest recordings, this is the story of the hard-working, hard-living drummer who remains the stuff of legend. For more info or to order go to www.bonkheadbooks.com.



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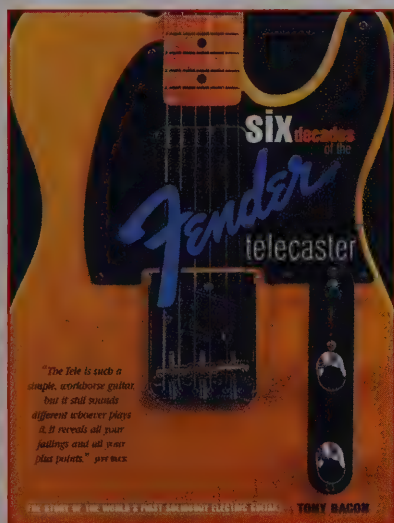




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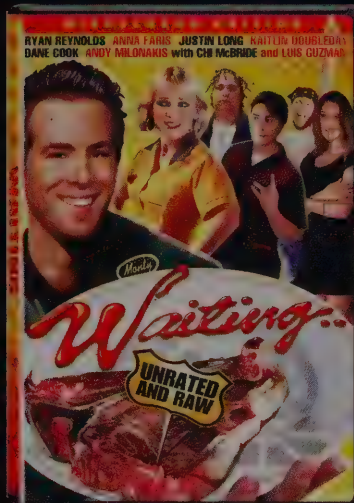


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HP DVD REVIEWS



WAITING...

Always remember the primary rule of eating out: Never mess with the people who handle your food! Ryan Reynolds, Anna Faris and Justin Long star in this hilarious comedy about the band of mischevous waiters, waitresses and cooks just waiting to show how extraordinary the service at ShenaniganZ restaurant can be.

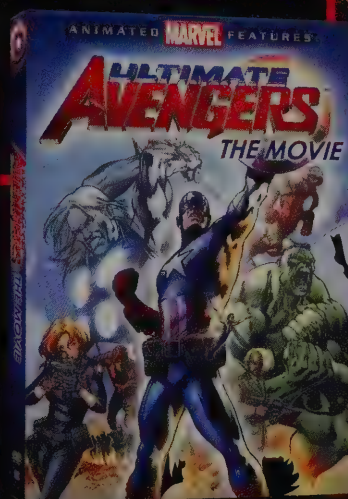
Waiting is a hysterical, behind-the-scenes look at the restaurant industry and an affectionate ode to those lost, and thoroughly unproductive, days of youth. Featuring stingy tippers, crazy busboys, unsanitary kitchen antics, dicey food and crazy parties, it might just be the grossest comedy of the year.

If you ever eat at a restuarant again after seeing this movie just remember to treat the waiters with some respect, or you may just end up with some unexpected ingredients in your food.

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TECH TALK WITH SEVENDUST

BY P.J. MERKLE

Sevendust are tired of hearing all the talk. Once again, they're ready to walk the walk. For nearly a decade this Atlanta-based hard rock unit has heard how they should be one of the biggest bands in the world... how each of their albums should sell at least a million copies... how they should be headlining arena tours from Boston to Bangkok. Yes, vocalist Lajon Witherspoon, guitarist John Connelly, drummer Morgan Rose, bassist Vinnie Hornsby and new guitarist Sonny Mayo (who replaces founding member Clint Lowery) have heard it all before. They also know that at times in the past they've come close to fulfilling such lofty expectations, when such discs as *Sevendust* and *Home* moved over 500,000 copies and threatened to shoot this multi-racial, multi-dimensional band into the metal stratosphere. But for whatever reason, the chemical reaction needed to turn gold into platinum never occurred, leaving these talented rockers disappointed, disillusioned and, more recently, disjointed.

But with the hiring of former Snot guitarist Mayo late in 2004, much of the internal disharmony that was raging within Sevendust apparently came to a quick and dramatic conclusion. Suddenly these life-long friends seemed to rediscover not only their love for the music they were creating, but their love for one another, as well. As almost a reflection of this life-affirming renewal, these Dust devils severed ties with their long-standing record label, and started their own firm, 7Bros, through which they've now released their latest disc, *Next*. Indeed, as 2006 kicks into high gear, it seems as if Sevendust are once again hearing whispers about how they might soon be among the biggest bands in the contemporary music world. Rather than letting such chatter turn their heads, however, these now-more mature and focused rockers are allowing such words to spur on their musical actions to a new level of intensity.

"This is a very honest record," Witherspoon said. "That may be the best way to describe it. 'We stripped away any of the pretense that may have crept in, and we did away with all the introspection that had characterized too much of the last few albums. This is a back-to-our-roots album where the guitars are loud, my vocals are roaring, and we want to tear your head off on every song.'"

So what exactly is at the heart of Sevendust revitalized attitude and reconstituted musical makeup? According to Witherspoon it's a combination of ingredients. First was the departure of long-time guitarist Lowery, who left the Dust fold to join with his brother Corey in the new hard rock unit, Dark New Day. Apparently, the axe slinger's attitude in recent years hasn't exactly served to inspire his musical mates to greatness. In addition, Witherspoon's ability to finally put behind him the tragic death of his brother back in 2003

allowed the singer to move from a retrospective phase back to being a rocker again. It's a sentiment, he states, that he wasn't alone in sharing during Sevendust's "dark days" just a few years ago.

"We all seemed to be going through problems," Witherspoon said. "Most of them were personal, but they were having an impact on us as a band and as people. We had to get past some of that, which wasn't easy. But we have, I'm happy to say. We've turned a major corner with *Next*. This is our fifth album—we've done a lot in our career. We've all gone through our personal storms and come back to realize just how much this all means to us. This is truly the next big step for us—the first album with a new member and for our own record label. It's all very exciting."

After being with TVT Records since their very inception of their career back in 1997, it wasn't particularly easy for Sevendust to break those long-standing ties and step out on their own. For a period of three months the band wasn't sure if they had made the right choice since major labels seemed hesitant to give them the kind of free-wheeling deal they wanted, and smaller labels simply didn't have the resources at their disposal to make the group's dreams come true. But finally a division of giant Universal Records stepped forward with the ol' "offer they couldn't refuse" and this quintet were only too happy to sign their names on the dotted line. The results of those actions are now apparent with the emergence of 7Bros Records.

"There were some people around us who wondered if we had gone crazy," Witherspoon said. "But we honestly knew what we were doing... more or less (laughs.) This label is something that we've been working on for quite a while. We had been with our previous label forever—since we were all kids. It's all we ever knew. So when the opportunity came to get out there and see what else was being offered us, it was a real eye-opener. But when Universal structured it so that we could have our own label we couldn't imagine a better opportunity than that. It was truly a dream-come true."

With a new label, a new album, a new guitarist, new management and for all intents and purposes a new lease on rock and roll life, this is quickly shaping up to be one of the most interesting and important times in Sevendust's long

career. But despite all the critical acclaim and fan interest that has been shown towards *Next*, some key questions remain: Has the Dust's best opportunity to rise to the top of the rock world already come and gone? Did the past success of mellow hits like *Angel's Son* transform the core of the band's audience? Was there a special chemistry to the group's original five members that can't again be captured? For his part Witherspoon can't wait to find out all the answers... though he already has a strong suspicion as to what those conclusions might be.

"We all know some fans are going to be watching us very closely," Lajon said. "We welcome that. We want to make sure that they share in our excitement. We're more focused and together than we've been in years. Over the last few albums, we tended to do a lot of the writing on our own, then bring the work together. But when Sonny joined the band it almost forced us to work together more closely. After all, we had a new member for the first time in a decade. But having him aboard really got us into a groove. It got us all on the same page for the first time in a while and that made a big impact on the music for this album. It made us all realize exactly how important this band is in our lives."

"The best way to describe this album is to say that it's very 'honest.'"

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BY MICHAEL SHORE

WINTER NAMM SHOW 2006

Recently Hit Parader attended the Winter NAMM Show in Anaheim, California. NAMM is the annual event where some of the biggest stars in the rock world hang out with the industry's top instrumental manufacturers in order to help endorse and promote the latest and greatest rock and roll equipment. This time around, as well as focusing in on the stars themselves—who, after all you can see on every other page of this fine publication—we thought we'd zero in on the year's most exciting new equipment. It was all on display at the Winter NAMM Show 2006.



Legendary bassist Dave Ellefson ties the Knot for Zodiac bass guitars.



Velvet Revolver's Dave Kushner signs stuff at the Raven Guitars booth.



Jane's Addiction guitarist Dave Navarro and Alterbridge's Mark Tremonti join forces for Paul Reed Smith.



A GUIDE TO THE LATEST GEAR



King's X could be found near their Randall amps.



We find Motorhead's notorious Lemmy hanging out with some Marshall amps.

INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING



DRUM

BEAT

Mike from Disturbed and Nick from Static X are both Sabian loyalists.

SABIAN

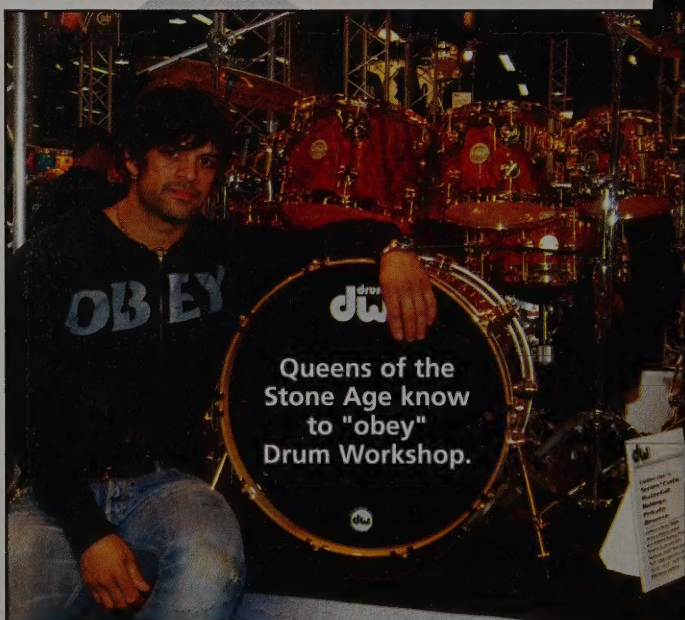


Kiss' Eric Singer shows his support for Zildjian cymbals.

Zildjian



Queens of the Stone Age know to "obey" Drum Workshop.





Rockin' new finishes, huge bass drum sound,
toms that project, and a snare drum that flat out cuts.

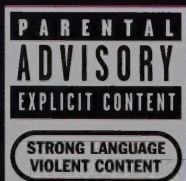


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